



# **NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL**

**MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA**

## **THESIS**

**EVALUATION OF COMPULSORY MILITARY  
SERVICE IN TURKEY USING A POPULATION  
REPRESENTATION MODEL**

by

Murat Engin

March 2016

Thesis Advisor:  
Second Reader:

Mark J. Eitelberg  
William D. Hatch

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**EVALUATION OF COMPULSORY MILITARY SERVICE IN TURKEY USING  
A POPULATION REPRESENTATION MODEL**

Murat Engin  
Captain, Turkish Army  
B.S., Turkish Military Academy, 2003

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

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**NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL  
March 2016**

Approved by: Mark J. Eitelberg  
Thesis Advisor

William D. Hatch  
Second Reader

William D. Hatch  
Academic Associate, Graduate School of Business and Public  
Policy

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## **ABSTRACT**

Most Western states have adopted an all-volunteer military force in response to shifting security needs, asymmetric threats, sociopolitical trends, technological advancements, and economic demands. In contrast, Turkey has depended on a military draft since its inception. Some observers have recently questioned whether Turkey's draft is due for major overhaul. Critics claim that Turkey's military should have more high-quality professional soldiers and that its draft is fundamentally unfair, somewhat ineffective, and out of step with modern times. In essence, they ask whether Turkey's old ways of populating the military can be improved.

The present study uses a Population Representation Model, first developed in the United States, to evaluate Turkey's military draft and the potential to establish an all-volunteer force. The model includes three basic criteria: political legitimacy, social equity, and military effectiveness. The results of applying these criteria to the situation in Turkey reveal relatively strong legitimacy under the current draft, specific issues relating to equity, and certain changes in the current draft that may possibly improve effectiveness. Nevertheless, the study indicates that abolishing compulsory military service in Turkey could create several complicated problems. Further study is recommended regarding the effect of contracting privates on the Turkish Armed Forces.

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## **I. INTRODUCTION**

Encircled with serious security risks and threats in a geopolitically fragile region, Turkey maintains one of the largest militaries in the world. To populate such a large military, the country has depended on compulsory service for young men since its inception. The military draft has, for the most part, worked very well both for the Turkish Armed Forces (TAF) and for the Turkish people. However, certain conditions in Turkey have changed with a post-Cold War national security environment, continuing economic growth, rapidly improving technology, and the evolving needs of the country. Despite these changes, Turkey has not taken necessary moves to reevaluate the draft and is one of the rare countries in NATO to have mandatory military service.

In recent years, the effectiveness of the Turkish military has been questioned by a number of scholars, statesmen, and retired military leaders. The main argument for this phenomenon is that the military is staffed by non-professional soldiers. Proponents of reevaluating the draft requirement state that the TAF has not taken these changes into consideration and questioned whether its old ways have rendered the Turkish military less effective.

The TAF has also begun to recruit professional enlisted personnel to fill some of its critical positions in the past five years. Although this new trend has pleased opponents of the draft, the ratio of volunteers to draft soldiers is still quite negligible. Yet, it constitutes a major shift for the Turkish military and could signal more changes to come. Indeed, this trend could conceivably raise concerns about a lack of social representation in the TAF, which is closely related to military effectiveness.

The draft may seem to have some negative impacts on the effectiveness of Turkish military. However, if the draft were abolished, irreversible side effects could affect Turkish society as well as many important functions of the Turkish military. Fixing potential problems created by the draft can have both direct and indirect implications for Turkish society, mainly originating from its longstanding historical ties to the military through the draft. This is the main reason why restructuring or removing the existing

draft would be complicated and controversial. Further, this is why decision makers in Turkey should keep in mind that efforts to change the current draft system may produce significant aftereffects for the whole of Turkish society in the years to come.

#### **A. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the military draft system in Turkey using a Population Representation Model (PRM) developed to assess America's All-Volunteer Force (AVF) soon after it was established (Eitelberg, 1979). The study aims to determine the best approach to provide manpower for the TAF presently and in the years ahead by exploring some possible alternatives and comparing them with the current military draft.

#### **B. METHODS OF ANALYSIS**

This thesis uses the PRM to evaluate the current military draft in Turkey. To do so, it uses both a quantitative and qualitative approach. It initially examines the history of conscription in the United States and applications of the PRM. Then, it explores the status of the military in Turkey and some recent developments with respect to military conscription. Finally, the study analyzes the Turkish draft using the PRM and tries to determine the best way to staff the TAF to increase its effectiveness.

#### **C. STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS**

This thesis is comprised of five chapters. Following the introductory chapter, Chapter II provides background information and a brief review of related literature. Chapter III examines social implications. Chapter IV evaluates the draft in Turkey, utilizing the PRM. Finally, Chapter V summarizes the study and provides conclusions and recommendations for further research.

Chapter II describes the manpower system of the Turkish military and the PRM to better evaluate the Turkish draft. A proper understanding of manpower procurement in the Turkish military and essentials of the draft constitute an initial step toward evaluating the current system of conscription in Turkey. Thus, the first part of Chapter II briefly addresses fundamentals of both the manpower procurement system in the TAF and the draft used to staff the military.

Then, the literature review examines the history of military conscription in the United States and of the PRM. The application of conscription in the United States, particularly during modern times, is fundamental toward fully understanding the PRM. . Next, a section on the PRM introduces its three general elements—political legitimacy, social equity, and military effectiveness—while focusing on key arguments for opponents and proponents of a draft or AVF.

Chapter III looks at social implications. The objective of this chapter is to examine the unique place of the Turkish military in society and the influence of some recent trends both in Turkey and in the world as long as the draft is involved. Chapter III consists of two parts: the military and the society in Turkey and recent trends both in the country and in the world.

Evaluating the military draft without examining the unique place of the military in Turkish society would be a mistake. Popular perceptions of the TAF are quite positive, and they originate from the long legacy of warriors that is as old as Turkish history. The TAF attained this status due largely to the role it played in preserving the nation. Historically, interactions of the military with Turkish society through the draft built and solidified certain perceptions, such as the military nation, soldiers as the saviors of the state, and service as a sacred duty. The first part of the discussion on the military and the society covers these concepts and describes draft rituals in Turkey that validate these perceptions.

Despite the strong, positive relation between the TAF and Turkish society, popular attitudes toward the Turkish military can move easily from one direction to another. This may adversely influence the perception of the draft in the country. In this context, some recent developments have potential to challenge the status of the Turkish military. These trends include trials of military service members stemming from an alleged military coup; the current fight with Kurdish terrorists (PKK), mostly in the southeastern part of the country; women's participation; and conscientious objection. The second part of this chapter covers these incidents and their possible consequences on popular perceptions of the draft.

Chapter IV evaluates the Turkish draft with respect to the PRM. The aim of this chapter is to analyze the draft system in Turkey by using this model, taking advantage of lessons from the U.S. military after the adoption of the AVF and applying them to the situation in Turkey. Obviously, not all lessons conform to the Turkish military. However, these analyses assist in assessing the choice between a draft and an AVF for Turkey. This chapter is comprised of three parts: the political legitimacy, social equity, and military effectiveness of the Turkish system for manpower procurement.

As noted above, the first part of the chapter analyzes the Turkish conscription system pertaining to political legitimacy. Arguments on political legitimacy center mostly on the idea of whether the military should be manned mainly with citizen-soldiers, who serve as a citizenship duty or a “calling,” or with professionals, who join voluntarily for their various personal reasons. Basically, AVF soldiers are career-oriented individuals who perform military service as an occupation, while draftees are citizen-soldiers who practice certain periods of military service as an obligation of citizenship. At this point, a draft and an AVF have different implications within the society and democratic culture of a country. This evaluation of the Turkish conscription system covers democracy, military adventurism, and trust in the military.

The second part of Chapter IV evaluates the Turkish draft system with respect to social equity. An equitable system of military service basically distributes the benefits and burdens of national defense proportionately across society. At this point, a draft and an AVF may produce different consequences. While a draft seeks to spread the burdens of national equitably across all segments of society, representation of certain people in the military may become of considerable concern in an AVF. The analysis of the Turkish draft from the issue of social equity looks at the representation of minorities/subgroups in the military, the benefits and burdens of military service, women’s representation, and conscientious objection.

Finally, the last part of Chapter IV focuses on military effectiveness. Since effectiveness is the most essential reason for creating a military, all nations look for ways to field the best military possible with limited resources. After adoption of the AVF in the United States and some notable failures in manpower recruiting, the quality of enlistees

improved significantly. At this point, lessons from the U.S. experience may offer some parameters for the Turkish military (i.e., using a perfectly representative draft). This part of the chapter seeks to analyze the effectiveness of the TAF in terms of the quality of its draftees, personnel turnover, and manpower management.

Chapter V summarizes the study and provides conclusions and recommendations for further research. First, it summarizes the project and then offers conclusions regarding the choice between a draft and an AVF for the Turkish military. Finally, it offers recommendations to improve the effectiveness of the TAF.

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## **II. LITERATURE REVIEW**

Providing security to its citizens is one of the most essential tasks of any nation. Countries allocate a substantial part of their national income for this purpose. As this top priority is costly, all militaries past and present have sought ways to raise the most effective military power with limited resources. Particularly in the twenty-first century, the effectiveness of militaries all over the world has become a matter of considerable interest and widespread debate (Binkin & Kyriakopoulos, 1979, p. 1). As a result, military organizations have often been subject to various transformations to meet the demands of nations in accordance with social movements, technological improvements, threat evaluations, and risk assessments. Among these are the transformations from a draft system to an All-Volunteer Force (AVF). Indeed, this particular transformation is one of the most significant of all, influencing the military as a whole and the society at least in part.

Although there had been mandatory military service in previous eras, the modern draft or conscription starts in the early nineteenth century with revolutionary France as a characteristic of the nation state (Alanc, 2007, p. 6). The draft as the fundamental means of staffing a military then became a global reality until the end of the Second World War. The most significant evolutions, however, were experienced during the late twentieth century, when military staffing as an issue closely related to its society underwent fundamental changes. The end of the Cold War, the influence of globalization, asymmetric threats, social welfare concerns, and sociocultural changes have all affected this trend (Domazos, 2012, p. 5). With the combined impact of these events, mostly in the Western world, several countries decided to staff their military differently, while some others, such as Turkey, maintained the draft that had proved to be so effective and which still enjoyed popular approval.

Military staffing models include systems that rely exclusively on volunteers, those that depend heavily on a draft, and those that combine volunteers with draftees. However, each of these models has a different meaning when applied to a particular society. While some states practice a different ratio of AVF and draft, others dictate different models,

like public or community services (Akyürek, 2010, p. 6). Some systems are also selective, in which only a very few people are actually required to serve. The other type of conscription, as in Turkey, is called “universal,” since all young men are required to serve. The mandatory service duration also varies from four months to 24 months. Among the trends described above, the most compelling change in military staffing was experienced in the United States.

As Warner and Asch write:

Over the next five years after the Vietnam War, economists produced a substantial volume of research about the draft and the feasibility of an AVF. The Gates Commission established for evaluation of U.S. military system unanimously recommended abolition of the draft and implementation of an AVF in 1970. The U.S. ended conscription on June 30, 1973, and since then the U.S. armed forces have relied upon volunteers to fill their ranks. (2001, p. 169)

The main reasons for introducing all-volunteer service in the United States during the 1970s related to demographics (the large size of the eligible population compared with reduced military needs), economic feasibility, fairness and individual freedoms, lingering opposition to the Vietnam War and its draft, and the U.S. military’s desire for change (Rostker, 2006, p. 746). This transformation was also expected to improve military capabilities because volunteers were viewed as more professional than the draftees they replaced, and it was assumed that volunteers would adjust more easily to military culture. After a while, however, the AVF came under increased critical scrutiny from both civilian and military sectors. A primary focus of concern was whether the AVF could succeed by attracting a broad cross section of highly-qualified young people dedicated to serving the nation more than their own self-interests. Others asked: are professionals merely mercenaries? Is an AVF appropriate or even legitimate for a democracy?

These concerns led to many public debates and discussions, Congressional hearings, government agency studies, and numerous scholarly articles and books about social representation in the military. As early as May 1974, the U.S. Senate required that the Department of Defense report annually on social representation in the U.S. military



services, a requirement that still stands over four decades later (OUSD [P&R], 2015). To evaluate social representation in the U.S. military and to assist defense policymakers, Mark J. Eitelberg created a conceptual approach called the “Population Representation Model” (PRM) in the late 1970s. His model included three principal components: political legitimacy, social equity, and military effectiveness (Eitelberg, 1979, p. 100). A basic premise of the model is that measures of population participation can be assessed using certain tolerable limits of approximate representation. Although the PRM does not offer numeric values for optimal representation, it illuminates our understanding of social, political, and military outcomes linked to population participation in a nation’s armed forces. As an original model, it may offer valuable insight for evaluating manpower problems of the Turkish Armed Forces (TAF).

Contrary to most Western and NATO states, Turkey has not transformed its military recruitment model from the draft to an AVF since the end of the Cold War. Encircled by serious security risks in a very fragile region, the country maintains one of the largest militaries in the world. Turkey continues to depend on the compulsory service of young men to populate this large military. The military draft has been important for both the TAF and the Turkish people. However, the conditions that led to the creation of Turkey’s draft have changed with the end of the Cold War, economic growth, technological improvements, and the evolving needs of neighboring countries. These have all contributed toward shaping a new security environment (Alanç, 2007, p. 39). Despite these significant changes, Turkey has not reevaluated its draft and is one of the rare countries in NATO to still enforce mandatory service (Akyürek, 2010, p. 2).

The present military manpower system in Turkey relies mostly on draftees along with professionals such as officers, non-commissioned officers, specialists, and contracting privates. The history of this composition goes back to Turkey’s distant past. Varoğlu and Bıçaksız (2005, p. 583) state that a combination of a minority of professionals and a majority of nonprofessionals historically constituted the body of the TAF even in the earlier Turkish States. In recent years, the TAF has started to employ more professionals and reduce the number of draftees with the professionalization trend begun in the 1990s.

This progress reduced TAF's dependence on draftees for positions that require comprehensive training and skills. Moreover, in the past five years, the TAF has started to recruit professional enlistees to man some of its critical positions. Although this new trend has aroused the interest of some scholars in Turkey who oppose the draft, the ratio of volunteers to draftees is still quite negligible. Some have seen it as an early step toward abolishing the draft, which would be a monumental change for the Turkish military. Nevertheless, this trend, if it eventually progresses toward ending the draft, has the potential to create sociopolitical problems in a society where the demands of military service are spread universally throughout the male population.

In recent years, a number of scholars, statesmen, and retired military leaders have questioned the effectiveness of the Turkish military. The main reason is that the military is staffed by non-professional soldiers (Akyürek, 2010, p. 13). Proponents of reevaluating the draft state that the TAF has overlooked new developments and recent trends in the world, which have ultimately rendered the military less effective.

Turkey's geographic location forces it to have a strong, effective, and deterrent military force both for internal and external purposes. Turkey must deal with potential adversaries, from neighboring nations as well as internal threats related to the Kurdish terrorists (PKK), mostly in the southeastern part of the country. The role of the Turkish military in protecting the interests and integrity of the nation proved to be crucial over the past three decades, demonstrating the compelling need for effective military power now and in the years ahead.

## **A. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

It is important to first understand the manpower procurement system of the TAF and the essential elements of the draft before evaluating optional methods of staffing the military. This background discussion summarizes the structure of the TAF and its manpower system by presenting information from the website of the Turkish General Staff. The discussion then focuses on explaining the draft system in the Turkish military, including periods of required service and service types.

### **1. The Structure of Turkish Military**

#### ***a. General***

The TAF is composed of the Army, the Navy, and the Air Forces subordinate to the Turkish General Staff, along with the Gendarmerie General Command and the Coast Guard Command, which are subordinate to the Ministry of Internal Affairs in peacetime and to the Land Forces and the Naval Forces Commands in wartime.

As the Turkish Constitution (1982) dictates:

The mission of TAF is to defend Turkey against risks and threats from abroad, preserve efficient and adequate deterrence capabilities by reinforcing military power, and execute the missions in abroad as per the Turkish Parliament's decision and support international peace (p. 23).

To achieve this objective, the tasks include “deterrence, shaping security/operational environment, operations other than war (to continue to support law enforcement agencies in the fight against terrorism and support national disaster aid operation when requested, peace support operations), crisis management, use of limited force, conventional war” (Mission, 2015, para. 2).

#### ***b. Manpower and Procurement***

Because the types of military operations are versatile and the magnitude of threats to Turkey's integrity is great, the Turkish military has to employ a vast number of people to manage its responsibilities. The Turkish military ranks fourteenth in active duty personnel strength in the world and second in NATO countries (Active Military Power by Country, 2015).

Three types of active duty personnel populate the Turkish military. These are officers, non-commissioned officers, and specialists and draftees. The TAF Personnel Act of 1927 on the personnel of the TAF regulates the procedures of officers and non-commissioned officers. The Contracting Personnel Act of 2001 on the contracting officers and non-commissioned officers, along with the former act, regulates procedures relating to contracting officers and non-commissioned officers. The Specialist Act of 1986 deals with issues regarding the service of specialists.

(1) Commissioned Officers

Commissioned officers mainly receive their commission in the branches of TAF through two routes. These are completion of education in service academies and employment through contracting officers.

The Army, Navy, and Air Force have military academies that provide a four-year education. Upon graduation, the cadets start their career as a second lieutenant in one of the services. The gendarmerie officers are trained in the Army Military Academy, and similarly Coast Guard officers are trained in the Naval Academy (The TAF Personnel Act, 1927).

The contracting officers are selected among four-year university graduates. To be eligible for duty, candidates have to pass a written, oral, and health exam, and a military training program that consists of boot camp and basic military disciplines. Technically, there is no difference between academy graduates and contracting officers. To attain a rank above captain, however, contracting officers have to pass a written and oral exam that can be taken between their seventh and thirteenth years of service (The Contracting Personnel Act, 2001, pp. 2–3).

(2) Non-commissioned Officers

Similarly, non-commissioned officers receive their commission primarily through two routes. These are completion of education in non-commissioned officer schools and employment through contracting non-commissioned officers. Non-commissioned officer schools accept high school and upper-level graduates and provide a two-year education.

Upon graduation, the cadets begin their service in the branches of TAF as staff sergeants (The TAF Personnel Act, 1927).

Contracting non-commissioned officers are selected among two- or four-year university graduates. Candidates have to pass a written, oral, and health exam to be eligible for duty. Technically, there is no difference between non-commissioned officer school graduates and contracting non-commissioned officers (The Contracting Personnel Act, 2001).

### (3) Specialists and Privates

Specialists have the same status as privates. However, they are considered more professional and are employed in more critical positions in TAF branches. They have been employed in the TAF since 1986. Only individuals who have completed their compulsory military service are eligible to apply for these positions (The Specialists Act, 1986).

Two types of service are used in TAF for a private. These include universally compulsory service and contracting privates. All male citizens from 20–41 years of age are obligated to serve in the Turkish military (The Turkish Recruitment Act, 1969). However, in recent years, the TAF has manned some of its more critical positions by contracting privates. The next part on the history of draft in Turkey includes detailed information about this type of military personnel.

### *c. Manpower in Numbers*

Information on military manpower strength in the TAF is taken from the website of the TAF. It would be more meaningful if the manpower strength of each service were available separately. For example, Air Force tasks are mostly technical and require less manpower than in the Army. Also, the Army generally fights against terrorists and is responsible for border protection, which depends on a large number of draftees. Unfortunately, the TAF does not provide data on the numerical strength of each service. So, the respective strengths of the Army, the Navy, and the Air Force are combined in the following tables.

Table 1 shows the number of professional soldiers in the TAF (TSK'dan Haberler, 2015). Despite the draft, the number of professional soldiers in the TAF is greater than that of powerful European states such as France (205,000), Germany (180,000), and Britain (150,000) (Active Military Power by Country, 2015). This implies that the current number of professional soldiers would be sufficient to man the TAF if the security environment of Turkey were similar to countries in Europe.

Table 1. Number of Professionals in TAF, 2015

Professional	Status	Army, Navy, Air Force	Gendarmerie	Coast Guard	Total
	Commissioned officer	32,554	6,499	668	39,721
	Non-commissioned officer	70,183	47,527	1,576	119,286
	Specialist	47,969	22,394	666	71,029
	Contracting Private	8,018	-	36	8,054
	Total	158,724	76,420	2,946	238,090

Adapted from TSK'dan Haberler (News from the Turkish Armed Forces). (12 December, 2015). Retrieved from [http://www.tsk.tr/3\\_basin\\_yayin\\_faaliyetleri/3\\_4\\_tskdan\\_haberler/2015/tsk\\_haberler\\_34.html](http://www.tsk.tr/3_basin_yayin_faaliyetleri/3_4_tskdan_haberler/2015/tsk_haberler_34.html)

Table 2 indicates that privates constitute the vast majority of non-professional soldiers. The number of 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenants also makes up only a small proportion (16 percent) of officers.

Table 2. Number of Non-professionals in TAF, 2015

Non-professional	Status	Army, Navy, Air Force	Gendarmerie	Coast Guard	Total
	2 <sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant	6,040	614	10	6,664
	Private/Corporal/Sergeant	232,824	81,924	1,294	316,042
	Total	238,864	82,538	1304	322,706

Adapted from TSK'dan Haberler (News from the Turkish Armed Forces). (12 December, 2015). Retrieved from [http://www.tsk.tr/3\\_basin\\_yayin\\_faaliyetleri/3\\_4\\_tskdan\\_haberler/2015/tsk\\_haberler\\_34.html](http://www.tsk.tr/3_basin_yayin_faaliyetleri/3_4_tskdan_haberler/2015/tsk_haberler_34.html)

Tables 3 and 4 show the total number of professional and non-professional soldiers and their ratios in the TAF, respectively. Despite the draft, the strength of professionals seems to be very close to that of non-professionals. It is also natural that the ratio of professionals in the Gendarmerie and in the Coast Guard is much greater, as their tasks require more professional units than do the other services.

Table 3. Total Personnel Strength of TAF, 2015

Total	Status	Army, Navy, Air Force	Gendarmerie	Coast Guard	Total
	Professionals	158,724	76,420	2,946	238,090
	Non-professionals	238,864	82,538	1,304	322,706
	Total	397,588	158,958	4,250	560,796

Adapted from: TSK'dan Haberler (News from the Turkish Armed Forces). (12 December, 2015). Retrieved from [http://www.tsk.tr/3\\_basin\\_yayin\\_faaliyetleri/3\\_4\\_tskdan\\_haberler/2015/tsk\\_haberler\\_34.html](http://www.tsk.tr/3_basin_yayin_faaliyetleri/3_4_tskdan_haberler/2015/tsk_haberler_34.html)

Table 4. Ratios of Professionals to Non-professionals, 2015

Ratios (%)	Army, Navy, Air Force	Gendarmerie	Coast Guard	Total
The ratio of professionals to non-professionals	0.66	0.93	2.26	0.74
The ratio of professionals to total	0.40	0.48	0.69	0.42

Adapted from: TSK'dan Haberler (News from the Turkish Armed Forces). (12 December, 2015). Retrieved from [http://www.tsk.tr/3\\_basin\\_yayin\\_faaliyetleri/3\\_4\\_tskdan\\_haberler/2015/tsk\\_haberler\\_34.html](http://www.tsk.tr/3_basin_yayin_faaliyetleri/3_4_tskdan_haberler/2015/tsk_haberler_34.html)

Table 5 shows that the ratio of contracting privates to draftees is negligible. However, this type of military service may catch up draftees if the recent trend continues. Contracting privates may also offer some horizons to improve the effectiveness of the Turkish military.

Table 5. Number and Ratio of Contracting Privates to Draftees, 2015

Number and Ratio	Army, Navy, Air Force	Gendarmerie	Coast Guard	Total
Contracting Privates	8,018	0	36	8,054
Draftees	232,824	81,924	1,294	316,042
Ratio (%)	3.5	-	3	2.5

Adapted from: TSK'dan Haberler (News from the Turkish Armed Forces). (12 December, 2015). Retrieved from [http://www.tsk.tr/3\\_basin\\_yayin\\_faaliyetleri/3\\_4\\_tskdan\\_haberler/2015/tsk\\_haberler\\_34.html](http://www.tsk.tr/3_basin_yayin_faaliyetleri/3_4_tskdan_haberler/2015/tsk_haberler_34.html)

## 2. The Draft System in Turkey

### a. General Principles

The Turkish Constitution (1982) and the Recruitment Act (1969) define general principles of the draft in Turkey. According to the Turkish Constitution:

National service is the right and duty of every Turk. The manner in which this service shall be performed, or considered as performed, either in the Armed Forces or in public service shall be regulated by law. (1982, p. 13)

This principle is reiterated in the Turkish Recruitment Act:

Every male national of the Republic of Turkey is obliged to perform his military service in accordance with this law. (1969, p. 831)

Military service in Turkey is mandatory for all male citizens from 20–41 years of age. Women are not allowed to serve as draftees but can become officers or non-commissioned officers if they enroll in military schools. The Turkish Recruitment Act offers a privilege to those who continue their university education to postpone their military obligation until they complete their education.

### b. History of Draft in Turkey

Roots of the military system in Turkey go back to the Ottoman Empire. Considering the high level of threats in the early 1900s that forced the Ottoman Empire to fight a number of wars, a draft system was crucial for the survival of the nation. From



1900 to 1923, the Ottoman Empire experienced two Balkan Wars, the Tripoli War, and the First World War, including fronts in Anatolia, the Middle East, the Balkans, Europe, and the Turkish Independence War (Uçarol, 1995, pp. 429, 467).

As a new state following the Independence War, Turkey maintained the Ottoman Empire's recruiting system from 1923 to 1927. With the country's Recruitment Act of 1927, the recruiting system was reestablished, and officers, petty officers, and draftees became the main elements of the new structure of the country. Since then, the Turkish military has been dependent on the same system with minor changes to this law, which regulates procedures such as service periods and types, deferments, health affairs, and student issues (The Turkish Recruitment Act, 1927).

The biggest change in Turkey's military manpower system came with the Contracting Private Law (Code No 6191). In 2011, the country introduced this law to meet the demands of TAF's critical personnel needs (The Contracting Private Act, 2011). Since then, the TAF has manned some of its positions with contracting privates along with draftees. The number of draftees and contracting privates in the Turkish military is shown in Table 6. Although the number of contracting privates is comparatively low, and time is needed to truly assess its full effect, this type of recruitment model may offer solutions to some of the perceived problems in the draft system.

As seen in Table 6, the strength of third lieutenants is relatively low compared with that of privates. This stems from two facts. The first is that the TAF does not need too many reserve officers, since the officer supply can meet the demands of the Turkish military. Second, most liable citizens do not conform to this type of service, as it requires at least a four-year university education. Also, the trend to employ contracting privates is a relatively recent phenomenon, and some time is needed before the TAF and the Turkish nation can evaluate the benefits and burdens of this service.

Table 6. Number of Turkish Armed Forces Recruited Personnel by Type, 2015

Status	Number
Private	316,042
Third Lieutenant	6,664
Contracting Private	8,054

Adapted from: TSK'dan Haberler (News from the Turkish Armed Forces). (12 December, 2015). Retrieved from [http://www.tsk.tr/3\\_basin\\_yayin\\_faaliyetleri/3\\_4\\_tskdan\\_haberler/2015/tsk\\_haberler\\_34.html](http://www.tsk.tr/3_basin_yayin_faaliyetleri/3_4_tskdan_haberler/2015/tsk_haberler_34.html)

### *c. Military Service Periods*

The total service period in Turkey is 21 years, starting at the age of 20 and ending at the age of 41. The Turkish government can change this period at the request of the Chief of Staff and by proposal from the Ministry of Defense (The Turkish Recruitment Act, 1927). According to the Law, the current military practice in Turkey is comprised of three periods covering the years above. These periods are call, active duty, and reserve.

#### *(1) Call*

This period starts when individuals are 20 years of age. In the call phase, the draftees' necessary procedures, including deferments and health exams, are finished in conscription offices. If liable citizens are attending higher education in universities, for example, they have the right to postpone their military responsibility until they graduate. Another important feature of this phase is health exams. If individuals are not eligible for service due to health problems, they are excused.

#### *(2) Active Duty*

In this period, recruits perform their service in military installations. In some cases, depending on the needs of the Education Ministry and personnel needs of the TAF, the Ministry of Defense allows draftees who are teachers to complete their military service in schools situated in underdeveloped parts of the country. Recruits' length of service is designated by the service type to which they conform, which is explained under the title of service types.

### (3) Reserve

All recruits who already have completed their service are responsible for reserve calls until the age of 41. This phase also necessitates mobilization exercises with the random participation of reserves.

#### *d. Service Types*

Two types of service are used in Turkey. Since 2011, as explained above, the Turkish military has also had a voluntary component along with draftees.

### (1) Compulsory Service

In January 2014, the Turkish government determined active-duty service periods. According to this determination, there are five service types. Service types are twelve months of service as a third lieutenant, six months of service as a corporal/sergeant, twelve months of service as a private, service in exchange for foreign currency, and paid service.

University graduates with at least four years of education can fulfill their obligation either as a third lieutenant in twelve months or as a corporal/sergeant in six months. The TAF is the final authority to decide on whether citizens will serve as a private or third lieutenant, depending on the needs of the military, the surplus of recruits, and their occupation codes and qualities. Men who perform their military service as a third lieutenant have the same status as officers. In addition, six months of service as a corporal/sergeant covers liable citizens eligible for serving as a third lieutenant. Twelve months of service as a private applies to liable citizens who are graduates of universities who offer less than four-year degrees.

Until the age of 38, Turkish citizens legally living and working in foreign countries for at least three years can also benefit from service in exchange for foreign currency. Those who want to complete their service have to pay 6,000 Euro (\$6560) and will be exempt from service. This amount is subject to change according to decisions of the government.

Liabile citizens who are born before January 1, 1988, can benefit from paid service. Those who want to benefit from this right have to pay 18,000 TL (\$6,000) and will be exempt from service. This type of military service was first implemented in 1999. The Turkish government initiated paid service to recover from financial losses of the *Izmit* earthquake in 1999. In 2011 and 2014, the Turkish Government also provided the opportunity for eligible citizens to perform their service under the title of this service type. In the first application of this service, eligible citizens had to perform a short period (21 days) of military practice in barracks. However, this option was abolished in 2011, and current citizens benefiting from this right do not have the military service obligation.

Table 7 shows the number of men who used paid service in 1999, 2011, and 2014. Although the idea originated as a way to support the recovery of the nation after a fatal earthquake, nearly three times more men applied for this service in 2014 than in 1999. The social implications of this service are discussed below:

Table 7. Number of Citizens Utilizing Paid Service, 1999, 2011, and 2014

Year	Number of Citizens
1999	72,290
2011	69,073
2014	203,824

Adapted from: *Bedelli Askerlik (Paid Service)*. (12 February, 2016). Retrieved from [https://tr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bedelli\\_askerlik](https://tr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bedelli_askerlik)

## (2) Contracting Privates (AVF)

The Contracting Private Act states that all Turkish men with at least an elementary school education and under the age of 25 (regardless of whether they completed their compulsory service) and those with a high school diploma and under the age of 20 (and have not completed their compulsory service) are eligible to become a contracting service member. This type of service is very similar to that of the AVF in the United States and other Western nations. However, women are not allowed to serve as

contracting privates in the TAF. Although the number of contracting privates in the Turkish military is currently quite negligible (see Table 6), this practice may be useful in strengthening the effectiveness of the Turkish military.

## **B. LITERATURE REVIEW**

The literature review focuses on the history of conscription in the United States and of the PRM. The history of conscription in the United States relates directly to the concepts, theories, and principles that support the PRM. Although Eitelberg (1979) introduced the PRM to examine the sociopolitical implications of the AVF after 1973, the origins of modern-day issues involving military service can be traced to the earliest foundations of the nation. Eitelberg (1979) draws heavily on historical practices, traditions, and precedents to explain how the military's relationship with its host society determines popular and political views on citizen participation in the military. This includes evolving attitudes on "who should serve when not all serve," as well as changing policies on those in the population who are considered obligated, eligible, or qualified to defend the nation.

The history of conscription in the United States is actually one of the most important factors in understanding the PRM. U.S. military history and the PRM suggest unique lessons that can be applied to almost any country. For example, the commutation fee during the Civil War and the targeted use of deferments in later years were seen as violating social equity, and they aroused social unrest in the United States. This is very similar to the likely consequences of recent trends in Turkey, such as paid service. Also, an AVF is claimed by some to subvert the principles of democratic legitimacy and civil-military relations by undermining civilian control and creating a gap between society and the military. For instance, scholars have criticized the AVF in the United States because of its increased potential for military adventurism, freedom from traditional controls or scrutiny, and intervention in political life (Fallows, 2015). These examples also provide guidance for Turkey, which is likewise seen as vulnerable to possible military adventurism and has experienced military interventions in recent past.

Clearly, conditions in the United States and Turkey are dissimilar due to many factors, including culture and history, governmental structure and laws, population demography, the dominating security environment, military strength, and manpower procurement. However, the U.S. military's history with the draft and AVF, placed in context with the PRM, is instructive as we seek to better understand the choice between the existing draft and alternative systems for Turkey.

## **1. History of Conscription in the United States**

The United States has relied generally on volunteers to man its armed forces (Rostker, 2006, p. 19). The nation, however, has depended on a draft to provide soldiers during times of conflict that necessitated extensive numbers of people to serve (U.S. Congressional Budget Office, 2007, p. 2). Men were drafted during the Revolutionary War, the Civil War, the First and the Second World Wars, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War.

The peacetime draft is also an important feature of the U.S. military. The Selective Training and Service Act of 1940 put the first peacetime draft in practice to prepare for potential U.S. involvement in the wars in Europe and Asia. Later, the U.S. military depended on the draft after the Second World War up to the Korean War. But, the United States experienced the longest and largest peacetime conscription from the time of the Korean War to the Vietnam War due to Soviet threats (U.S. Congressional Budget Office, 2007, p. 3). Whether during wartime or peacetime, the U.S. Armed Forces depended on a combination of draftees and volunteers even when the draft existed (The Report of President's Commission on an All-Volunteer Armed Force, 1970, p. 6).

### ***a. Revolutionary War***

The United States imported the practice of conscription from England, dating back to the colonial militia (Coakley & Conn, 2010, p. 11). The Thirteen Colonies built their defense upon the militia system in colonial times (Perri, 2013, p. 429). The first law, the Militia Act of 1792, necessitated selection of liable citizens for the military. It generally required the enrollment of able-bodied men, completion of basic military

training, and military service for designated periods of time (Congress Passes Civil War Conscription Act, n.d.).

Although the system was universal compulsory service at the beginning, the colonies employed different practices. Regardless of the colony, however, the Militia Act had two obligations. First, it required enrollment of all men between certain ages (generally from 16 to 60), with only a few exceptions. Second, it obligated military training (Hummel, 2001, p. 32).

***b. Civil War***

At the beginning of the Civil War, patriotic sentiments encouraged thousands of men in the Northern states to participate voluntarily in the Union Army. But with early failures, Northerners understood that the conflict would not end quickly (Sandel, 2009, p. 76). More troops had to be raised, and, in July 1863, the U.S. Congress introduced the first federal wartime draft in the United States. The act required all men between the ages of 20 and 45 to register for military service, including resident aliens who had filed to become a U.S. citizen (Perri, 2007, p. 6).

The draft, however, did not necessarily mean that everyone was equally likely to serve in the military. For example, drafted men were allowed to hire a qualified substitute to serve in their place. Alternatively, a drafted man could buy his way out of service by paying a commutation fee of \$300 (the equivalent of about \$5,800 in 2015). The price of commutation was considered necessary to set a practical, upper limit on what a person might pay to hire a substitute (Earnhart, 2013, p. 226, 227; U.S. Congressional Budget Office, 2007, p. 4). The two provisions were intended to reduce opposition to conscription and provide an easy out for men who were opposed to the war. However, the opt-out provisions favored those who could afford the cost, and many saw them as grossly unfair to the poor and middle classes. Infuriated by the idea that such exemptions were given only to the wealthiest U.S. citizens, and that freed blacks were ultimately responsible for the war, protesters rioted violently in New York City in 1863 when the first draft calls were announced (Vodrey, 2010). “The rich man’s money against the poor

man's blood" became a common call of protest to perceived inequities in the new draft (Earnhart, 2013, p. 227).

***c. First World War***

Just before the United States engaged in the First World War, it enacted the National Defense Act in 1916, which enlarged the U.S. military to 175,000. It required male citizens between the ages of 18 and 45 to serve in the military. This act also authorized the president to enlist militia if the number of volunteers were inadequate (Perri, 2013, p. 432). Called the selective service system, the goal of the law was to recruit the manpower needs of the army while allowing the country to benefit from people who were valuable to the war economy.

Upon registering for service, the system classified individuals into five categories, depending on their industrial potential. According to Sandel (2009, p. 129), "Local draft boards classified 10 million draft registrants into these categories by eligibility and liability for the service." Citizens in Class I were enlisted first as they were least likely to disturb economic life, while men in the other groups were extended. Next, for individuals who were least likely to support the civilian war effort, a lottery was employed.

Selection procedures during this period abolished some of inequities of the previous period. However, men who were ethnic minorities or of lower socioeconomic status may still have been drafted disproportionately (U.S. Congressional Budget Office, 2007, p. 4). As Murray (1971) suggests: "Black men were more likely than white men to be categorized as Class I, which means a higher probability of being drafted. Although black men made up slightly less than 10 percent of registrants, they constituted more than 13 percent of draftees" (p. 57).

***d. Second World War***

The United States enacted the draft just before it entered the Second World War. Public opinion during the time was undecided on using the draft. Although some part of the society contended that poor or jobless people were more likely to be drafted, the



United States enacted a conscription law in 1940 (U.S. Congressional Budget Office, 2007, p. 5).

In the very beginning of the war, the country used a lottery system to enlist the first draftees. Later, the U.S. military started to enlist the oldest men in the eligibility pool first. Volunteers also had been able to serve until late 1942. As Perri (2013) states: “Although the objective was to distribute the obligation of military service equally, the goal may not have been attained as in the case of World War I” (p. 433).

However, it was not as easy for men to avoid the draft during the Second World War. “Draft deferments were more limited during the Second World War than before. Occupational deferments were permitted only for government officials and people in jobs considered necessary to public health or for industrial needs” (Hershey, as cited in Rostker, 2006, p. 26). College students were also able to benefit from deferments (U.S. Congressional Budget Office, 2007, p. 5). Additionally, the president had been able to authorize exemptions for public reasons. Married men and fathers were more likely to benefit from deferments than unmarried ones (Rostker 2006, p. 26).

*e. Korean War*

The number of draftees during the Korean War constituted a smaller percentage of enlisted soldiers. Draftees filled nearly half of the military’s manpower needs during this period (U.S. Congressional Budget Office, 2007, p. 3). Yet, as Perri indicates, “Even when no one was drafted, the draft was a tool to induce volunteers to apply” (2013, p. 434). One of the reasons for this was that volunteers did not have a reserve obligation as opposed to that of five years for draftees, although volunteers had a longer service time (three years) than did draftees (21 months).

The main reason for educational and occupational deferments in this period was to keep the work force robust (Janowitz, 1982, 406). Flynn describes these reasons. “The aim of draft was to protect the economy and to maintain war production. But, farmworkers were more likely to be deferred than people in other occupations. In 1951, those in key industrial jobs received 24,000 deferments, whereas farmworkers received 85,000 deferments” (Flynn as cited by Perri, 2013, p. 434).

*f. Vietnam War*

The principles during this war were similar to those of the Second World War: “Individuals registered at the age of eighteen and were called between ages of eighteen and a half and twenty-six for two years with an additional a reserve obligation” (Perri, 2013, p. 434). However, there was a disproportional distribution for infantrymen as draftees. As Flynn (2002) writes, “One out of six individuals in the military was a draftee, but 88 percent of the infantrymen in Vietnam were draftees” (pp. 75-76).

Deferments were also used widely in this period. However, not all citizens were able to benefit equally from this privilege. For example, children of wealthy families were able to have easier access to health and educational deferments than were those of poor and middle-class families. Another argument during the Vietnam War was that African Americans and Latinos were more likely to be drafted and to serve in front lines than were white Americans (Binkin & Eitelberg, 1982). In fact, as Binkin and Eitelberg (1982) observe: “Between 1961 and 1966, when blacks composed approximately 11 percent of the general population aged nineteen to twenty-one, black casualties amounted to almost one-fourth of all losses of Army enlisted personnel in Vietnam” (p. 32). Civil rights leaders in the United States at the time claimed that the military was using minorities as “cannon fodder for a war directed by whites,” provoking Martin Luther King, Jr. to propose a boycott of the war by African Americans (Binkin & Eitelberg, 1982, p. 76).

During the Vietnam War, opposition to the draft increased as the conflict grew increasingly unpopular. Also, as Perri (2013) writes:

A neglected factor against the conscription may have been the comparatively poor pay for those in the lowest ranks. Between 1946 and 1966, the median real family income increased by 69 percent. The real pay of generals almost kept pace, increasing by 64 percent; senior sergeants’ real pay increased by 48 percent; but privates’ real pay declined by 24 percent. (p. 434)

*g. Post-Vietnam Era*

The modern period of military recruiting in the United States begins with President Richard Nixon. In 1968, he based his election campaign on the promise to

abolish the draft. Influenced by the antiwar movement, Nixon aimed to achieve “a full generation of peace” (Nixon, 1971, para. 2). Upon taking office in 1969, he appointed a commission, later called the Gates Commission, to evaluate the feasibility of ending the draft (Rostker, 2006, pp. 76–77).

As *The Report of President’s Commission on an All-Volunteer Armed Force* (1970) states: “We unanimously believe that the nation’s interests will be better served by an all-volunteer force, supported by an effective stand-by draft, than by a mixed force of volunteers and conscripts” (pp. 56). As the war in Vietnam wound down, draft calls were reduced. The end of the draft was ultimately decided when the U.S. Congress voted to not extend the draft law beyond its expiration. The AVF began officially in July 1973, soon after the signing of the Paris Peace Accords, which removed the United States from the conflict. The result, as Rostker (2006) observes, was significant:

The AVF has remarkably changed the U.S. military. Firstly, it improved the quality of the force measured by scores on standardized IQ tests. Secondly, it increased the percentage of new recruits with a high school diploma. The AVF also positively influenced the number of career personnel and increased the proficiency and the professionalism of the force. (p. 6)

At the same time, however, the AVF raised some questions among scholars concerning the military’s relationship with society. The social implications of the military, including population representation within its ranks, the legitimacy of power, civil-military relations, and the isolation of military members and their families, came under close scrutiny. Some observers began to question the very existence of the AVF, as proponents of a return to the draft accumulated and became more vocal. Although it is difficult under any circumstances to reach a definitive conclusion on the best way to man a military, these studies offer a different perspective on the effectiveness of America’s AVF with respect to its relationship to society.

## **2. Population Representation Model**

### ***a. General***

The goal of this section is to introduce the PRM and its elements, while focusing on key arguments for opponents and proponents of a draft and an AVF. The next chapter presents a more detailed analysis of the PRM by focusing on the period of transformation from a draft to an AVF in the U.S. military after the Vietnam War.

It can be said that the transformation of the draft to an AVF positively affected the military's capabilities in the United States because volunteers were generally more professional than the draftees they replaced, they adjusted more easily to military culture, and they were more highly qualified overall. However, after a while, scholars started to criticize the AVF because of the social problems it was likely to pose.

Moskos (1977), with his institution-occupation model, is one of the more prominent critics of his time. In his model, Moskos (1977) asserted that the military as a social organization moved from being an institution, which demonstrates key norms and values, to an occupation, which relies on self-interest as a motivational tool. Janowitz (1975) also described a gap between U.S. society and the military, claiming that this stemmed largely from the military being unrepresentative of the society that it served. Influenced by Moskos, Janowitz, and other military sociologists, Eitelberg (1976, 1979) proposed a new approach called the PRM for evaluating social representation in the U.S. military.

Eitelberg's model included three primary components: political legitimacy, social equity, and military effectiveness. Throughout history, military effectiveness has always been a top priority for nations. The terms of political legitimacy and social equity are indispensable parts of democratic institutions and civil society. These two elements of PRM have become increasingly popular since the rise of democratization and the expansion of individual rights in the twentieth century. However, as Eitelberg (1979) asserts: "Only in recent years have these three categories of thought become uniquely interrelated as defense manpower policy issues" (p. 100).

Although most major demographic groups are represented within the military, not every group is proportionately represented. Many arguments support seeking a military that is broadly representative of American society. Working from Eitelberg's model, the Congressional Budget Office summarized the three issues associated with population representation:

Military effectiveness—meeting the need for personnel who are capable of performing military jobs; social equity—spreading the burden of national defense across all segments of society; and political legitimacy—involving the belief that the military ought to be a part of society rather than separate from it. (U.S. Congressional Budget Office, 1989, p. 5)

***b. Elements of PRM***

The PRM aims to evaluate population representation in the U.S. military and to determine whether it is within tolerable limits. The model cannot specifically provide numeric values and limits for optimal representation. Yet, it provides a path toward understanding better social and military outcomes based on the model's parameters. Although it seeks answers specific to the sociopolitical problems of the U.S. military, especially after abolishing the draft, the PRM can be applied to any country.

**(1) Political Legitimacy**

Arguments on political legitimacy address the idea of whether the military should be manned mainly with professional and career-oriented “regulars” or with “citizen-soldiers” who practice certain periods of military service as an obligation of citizenship (Eitelberg, 1979, p. 255). The most important elements of political legitimacy are as follows: first, the need to control the military establishment from potentially despotic influences and, second, to preserve the patriotic fiber of the nation by asserting the citizen's duty to bear arms.

Advocates of both a draft and an AVF contend theoretically that the army should both harmonize with American democratic society and offer an effective national defense (Weigley as cited by Eitelberg, 1979, p. 255). However, their ideas fundamentally differ when it comes to the composition of military structure. The main reason for the different interpretations is identified as follows by the Congressional Budget Office (1989):

One reasonable person could answer the questions posed by Morris Janowitz and Charles Moskos above in the affirmative; another could answer in the negative. So, it is with most of the issues under this heading: disagreements derive from differences of opinion, rather than from different interpretations of the same set of facts. (p. 12)

Proponents of voluntary service tend to associate conscription with totalitarian regimes, at the same time arguing that a link between the military and society can be maintained by other means than a representative military. On the other hand, supporters of mandatory service tend to argue that the AVF is likely to lead to military despotism since it lacks true citizen involvement and necessary means for democratic control. Moreover, they insist that civilian control of the military requires a military population that shares the same basic values, and in the same proportion, as the society it serves (U.S. Congressional Budget Office, 1989, p. 13).

Supporters of the draft also claim that “a professional army, as opposed to one with a preponderance of citizen soldiers, is more likely to become involved in military adventurism” (U.S. Congressional Budget Office, 1989, p. 12). Their main point is that a draft spread the burdens of war throughout society and makes the public more aware of the use of military force. This creates an effect that favors diplomacy and discourages military adventurism. As the public sees their sons being killed in the war and wounded veterans returning home, they naturally become more sensitive to the justifications for a war, its funding, and the manner in which it is conducted. This, in contrast to an AVF, may force national leaders to put more effort into achieving a peaceful settlement through means other than war (The Draft, 2015).

## (2) Social Equity

Throughout history, defending the country has been an obligation of every citizen (at least every male citizen) in most nations. Every citizen had to be prepared to take up arms and come to the aid of his or her country. But, mostly in the United States and other Western states, especially after the end of the Second World War and the Cold War, this changed dramatically when the nations removed conscription to man their militaries. No longer was it necessary to involve every able-bodied man or woman directly in the

nation's defense. The nations then became independent of the readiness of large military forces, as was the case before an AVF. Then, as now, the central question in any debate over the best means of staffing the military is: "Who shall serve when not all serve?" (U.S. Congressional Budget Office, 1989, p. 8).

An equitable system of military service ensures that the "benefits and burdens (or rights and responsibilities) of national defense are distributed proportionately throughout society" (Eitelberg, 1979, p. 185). Although benefits differ from country to country, they generally include a secure job, better training and educational opportunities, economic benefits directed specifically to service members, social status, and a high level of mobility. At the same time, serving in the military entails risks and threats. At this point, the question emerges whether everybody shares the same risk of having to serve (the lottery draft solution or universal conscription) and whether all segments in society are equally represented among those who choose to serve (the AVF solution).

Before the AVF, this issue was regarded as relatively minor by those who trusted the fairness of selective service. Nevertheless, many questions had been raised over the preceding years about the fairness and treatment of racial/ethnic minorities, as well as the fairness of deferments in the United States as they affected the poor and those of lesser economic means. Also, in countries that currently maintain a draft system, there are some loopholes that elites are able to exploit. However, after instituting the AVF in the United States, the overrepresentation of minorities in the enlisted ranks became a focus of considerable debate along with whether the objective of social equity is being fulfilled (Batt, 1988; Binkin & Eitelberg, 1982).

### (3) Military Effectiveness

Military capability is the ultimate benchmark of national power: "These capabilities not only allow countries to defend themselves against both foreign and domestic adversaries but also enable their state managers to pursue whatever interests they wish" (Tellis, Bially, Layne, & McPherson, 2000, p. 133). This is the major reason why "military effectiveness—or the creation of a thoroughgoing, competent armed force—has been a primary concern of all the nations" (Eitelberg, 1979, p. 100).

Military effectiveness ensures a “capable, cohesive, and effective fighting force, in symbol as well as in need” (Eitelberg as cited by Domazos, 2012, p. 137). In the end, “The objective of creating an army is not to be fair; it is not to be economical. It is to fight a war” (Gold, 1986, p. 148). So, it should be emphasized that “effectiveness, however, though intertwined with the issues of equity and legitimacy, is directly related to military representation only insofar as such representation provides the best and most capable military force” (Eitelberg, 1979, p. 349).

Although all nations obviously seek to have an effective military force, it is quite impossible to measure precisely whether a draft or an AVF produces more effective troops. Yet, one of the best ways to estimate future performance and capability is to evaluate the quality of personnel through scores on standardized aptitude tests and education levels. However, it is empirically difficult to find a clear relationship between the effectiveness of a military force based predominantly on these two measures. Qualitative measures of personnel are merely indicators at best, but they are also the best way to predict a range of other measures that likewise relate to force effectiveness.

Draft supporters argue that an AVF would not be able to provide necessary manpower in case of an urgent crisis. They also claim that young people would not join the military, considering the risks and threats of deployment and fighting. However, proponents of an AVF, such as Eitelberg, state that social representation sometimes poses challenges to the military’s effectiveness. According to Eitelberg (1979):

Perhaps the best example of how composition can negatively influence military effectiveness is, ironically, perfect representation. Perfect representation implies that the worst, as well as the best, elements of society be present in the ranks of the military. (p. 350)

## **C. CONCLUSION**

The background information in this chapter examines the essential features of the TAF manpower system and the draft in Turkey. It provides information about personnel types, procurement models, and personnel strength in the TAF. Finally, it explores the draft system by showing service types and periods. This information is an important baseline for evaluating the draft in Turkey.



The literature review focuses on the history of conscription in the United States, from the American Revolutionary War through the post-Vietnam era. Shifts during these periods and lessons learned from each are crucial for better understanding the PRM. These examples from the history of the United States can also be applied to any country, such as Turkey, despite some differences between the two countries. Next, the PRM is explained briefly along with its essential features. This section examines the pros and cons of both a draft and an AVF by providing selected views of scholars on both sides of the issue.

The PRM implies that it is almost impossible to find an optimum way to raise the most effective military units while adhering strictly to the principles of political legitimacy and social equity. Furthermore, this conceptual model has different meanings when applied to a particular society that is far different from that of the United States. But, the lessons learned from the U.S. example and theoretical and empirical studies since the abolition of the draft may offer insights to resolving manpower problems within other countries.

Elements of social representation within the PRM are so intertwined that it is difficult to sacrifice one for another or support one over the others. This is more than evident for the TAF. However, the Turkish military has to reach a decision to keep up with recent trends in the world before it is too late. Its geography dictates it should have an effective military power, which conflicts partly with the current draft system. On the other hand, social equity traditionally necessitates that the burdens of service should be shared equally among individuals in society, a principle that underpins the present system of conscription. Finally, political legitimacy implies that the military should reproduce the social fabric of the nation and reflect the general attitude toward the military in Turkey.

The next chapter addresses the elevated status of the TAF in Turkish society and some of the latest developments both in Turkey and in the world. The draft has been partly responsible for the prestige of the Turkish military. The place of military has been solidified by concepts such as the military nation, soldiers as saviors of the state, and the so-termed Atatürk effect, service as a sacred duty and rituals created through the draft.

However, this high status of the Turkish military may be subject to shifts from one direction to another because of some recent phenomena including trials of service members for an alleged military coup, the fight with terror, women's participation, and conscientious objection.

### **III. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

One should not evaluate Turkey's military draft without first examining the relationship of the military to Turkish society and recent trends toward military service in the nation and throughout the world. The place of the military in Turkey is unique and dissimilar to that of any other nation in Western or Eastern culture. The draft has obviously influenced this perception. However, recent developments both in Turkey and in the world have called into question the highly respected status of the Turkish military, which may have direct or indirect consequences in the years ahead.

The elevated status of the Turkish soldier is based on a long legacy of warriors that extends far back in Turkish history. This history established the concept of a military nation and introduced the idea of sacred duty for military service. Further, the military played a substantial role in aiding the Turkish nation when it was in trouble. In many cases, it was the military that saved the nation and raised great leaders such as Atatürk and his associates. Finally, numerous draft rituals have been created by Turkish society, emphasizing the importance of military service. These patriotic traditions are strongly connected to the draft and demonstrate public support for the Turkish military.

In recent years, however, certain events in Turkey have threatened to weaken the admired position of the Turkish military. These events may likewise affect the popular perceptions of the draft. First, accusations and subsequent trials of military service members for an alleged military coup adversely influenced public trust in the military when the details were initially revealed. The impact of these trials was limited after some of the evidence was shown to be fictitious (Karar, 2014). Second, the current fight with Kurdish terrorists (PKK) in the southeastern part of the country may also have some potential effects on the nation's approach to compulsory service.

Additionally, recent developments, such as women's participation in the military and conscientious objection, have gained significant attention throughout the world. Although these trends are quite new for Turkish society, they are likely to influence the reputation of the military in the country as long as the draft is involved.

## **A. THE MILITARY AND SOCIETY IN TURKEY**

Most of the Turkish people share great trust in their military and its commanders. This is built upon the significant role of the TAF in critical times. Actions of the Turkish military and its leaders helped create concepts such as military nation, soldiers as saviors of state, and military service as a sacred duty. These ideas earned the military an exclusive place of honor within Turkish society. As a result, Turkish citizens largely view the military as inseparable from the nation. The various rituals relating to military service reinforce the validity of these ideas.

Turkey has been regarded as a “soldier nation” by most observers. Historical facts along with views of Turkish and Western scholars support this idea (İnalçık, 2004; Lyber, 1913; Jenkins, 2007). Moreover, soldiers are viewed by most Turks as heroic “saviors of the state” when things become messy. For example, it was the military that established a new modern state after the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire following the First World War. Further, while compulsory military service is often described as a necessary but unpleasant requirement of citizenship in most of the world, it is viewed as a sacred duty in Turkey. It is also seen as a voluntary action in the sense that every young Turkish man celebrates being part of it, as demonstrated in different public or family rituals for sendoff and “welcome home” ceremonies (Varoğlu & Bıçaksız, 2005).

### **1. Military Nation**

The validity of an idea can be proportional to its general acceptance by prominent scholars and statesmen. That is, if there is a consensus of opinion on an idea, then one can more easily accept its legitimacy. More important than that is whether it is also accepted by foreigners. The idea of a military nation for Turks is no exception to this rule. There has always been a link between this concept and the draft in Turkey. One can find numerous assertions about this issue, even in a quick search of publications. Not surprisingly, the opinion of Turkish and Western scholars, along with important statesmen, bolsters this concept of Turkey as a military nation.

Halil İnalcık, with a large number of published books, articles, and research, is the most influential historian on Ottoman history in Turkey. He writes:

The Turkish nation has preserved its military-nation character from the beginning of history until today.... If the Turk is...marching on the forefronts of world history that is because of his unshakable national military characteristics, his grand military virtues and his ability to engage in total war for his rights and freedom. The Turk has inherited this character from his history that goes back thousands of years. (Altınay, 2004, p. 30)

Along with Inalcık, there are also numerous Westerners supporting this understanding of Turkey as a military nation. A prominent Western scholar Albert Howe Lybyer (1913) claims, “the Ottoman Empire was an army before it was anything else” (p. 90). It was the Ottoman Army that played a substantial role during the establishment of the empire before it really claimed to be a state. Another Turkish expert, Gareth Jenkins (2007) writes, “By personally devoting themselves to the military profession Turks have demonstrated to the entire world that they formed an army-nation” (p. 340). It was also the Turkish nation that believed and backed its armed forces during its history and proved the genuineness of this claim.

The views of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the founder of the Turkish Republic, can make sense at this point. Atatürk addresses the idea of a military nation when he talks with Turkish youth in his famous book, *Nutuk* (The Address). Here, he describes the first duty of Turkish youth as preserving and defending Turkish independence and the Turkish Republic. Additionally, Mustafa Kemal describes duty as the most fundamental foundation of Turkey’s existence and the most precious treasure of Turkish youth:

If some day you are compelled to defend your independence and your republic, you must not hesitate to weigh the possibilities and circumstances of the situation before doing your duty. Youth of Turkey’s future, even in the most difficult circumstances it is your duty to save Turkish independence and the Republic. You will find the strength you need in your noble blood. (Atatürk, 2014, p. 294)

There are also several reminiscences showing how this attitude has been passed along to succeeding generations. For example, Sabiha Gökçen, one of Atatürk’s adopted daughters, became the first woman combat pilot in the world. She recalled Atatürk’s response after her successful involvement in the 1937 military operation called Dersim:

I am proud of you, Gökçen! Also the whole Turkish nation that has closely been following this incident is proud of you. You should be proud of yourself for showing to the whole world, once again, what our young girls can do. We are a military nation. From ages seven to seventy, women and men alike, we have been created as soldiers. (Sabiha Gökçen as quoted by Altınay, 2004, p. 40)

Sometimes, a single memoir tells a thousand facts. The story of Yücel, a long-time education minister from 1938 to 1946, provides a clear example to show the feelings of most of Turkish citizens toward military service. He tells the following story:

When a general of the Turkish Army told him, partly joking, that he would not let anyone who is not a soldier kiss his hand, Yücel felt offended: “Is there a Turk who is not a soldier? I am a soldier, too, my dear Pasha.” (Altınay, 2004, p. 13)

Today, there is also a strong inclination within the TAF to identify with the Turkish nation. A former Land Forces Commander underscores the importance of the characteristic of the Turkish military nation and claims that the TAF and the soul of the Turkish nation are “inseparable” (Yalman as cited by Sarıgil, 2013, p. 3). Also, Ilker Basbug, former Chief of the General Staff, claims that the TAF essentially builds its power on the nation’s trust and love rather than that of the gun (Basbug as cited by Sarıgil, 2013, p. 3).

The saying, “*Her Türk asker doğar*” (“Every Turk is born a soldier”), is very popular with the Turkish public and shows the organic association between Turkish society and the military. As Wuthrich (2012) states, the meaning of this famous expression originates from the cultural transmission from a heroic national past through education. This education includes informal practices gained through family and community as well as formal applications through institutions such as school and the draft (Wuthrich, 2012, p. 258).

These views and remarks on the idea of a military nation are highly relevant to Turkey’s system of compulsory service. Since all young men are required to serve in the military, the TAF has become an important organization, directly for all male citizens and indirectly for women. Through the draft, they all become familiar with military service, which ultimately reinforces the concept of a military nation.

Further, the draft has emerged as an important educational instrument to pass along this idea to new generations. Consolidation of the concept of a military nation has been achieved through education in the military for years. As a result of this long historical process, it is taken for granted by the Turkish nation to see its military as part of the community that openly supports the concept of a military nation.

The idea of a military nation is an important outcome of the draft. The Turkish nation built this concept historically through conscription. However, negative feedback to the society through draftees also has the potential to adversely influence this concept. As a result, it is strategically important for the TAF to prevent any negative consequences and to keep ties with the nation as strong as possible. Additionally, the idea of a military nation could increase the quality of enlistees if Turkey were to move closer toward an AVF. Personal motivations based on moral values rather than financial concerns tend to produce better outcomes in any organization. So, the idea of a military nation could be equally important to the potential introduction of an AVF in Turkey.

## **2. Soldiers as the Saviors of the State and the Atatürk Effect**

The Turkish public views its military largely as a savior of the state. This is more than evident in the history and process that established the new Turkish Republic. With the dissolution of the 600-year-old Ottoman Empire, the Turkish Republic was founded in 1923. The Turkish military had become the most important driving force in the nationalist movement. And, because of its role in this course, the Turkish nation has built a significant trust in its military as a savior.

This trust goes back to the Ottoman times in the late twentieth century (İnalçık as cited by Altınay, 2004). The Ottomans, at their peak, controlled vast territories of northern Africa, southeastern Europe, and western Asia. However, they had not been able to escape from the destiny of disintegration as they failed to keep pace with developments in the Western World. Additionally, the French Revolution encouraged different nations within the Empire to gain their independence. Finally, the Ottoman Empire took part in the First World War as a German ally and was defeated at the end of the war (Uçarol, 1995).

When the war ended, the Allied powers signed the Treaty of Sevres with the Ottoman Sultan in 1920. This treaty demeaned and ignored Turkish existence in the Anatolia. British forces took control of Istanbul, the capitol of the Ottoman Empire. At the same time, French, Italian, and Greek armies invaded different Turkish areas in Anatolia.

Turkish society held politicians responsible for national defeat in the First World War and for the disintegration of the Ottomans. These tragedies, after a long period of glorious history with the Ottoman Empire, paved the way for Mustafa Kemal, also known as Atatürk (“Father of the Turks”), to take center stage and lead the Turkish nationalist struggle (Görgülü, 2014).

The great hero and the first president of Turkey, Atatürk “became the embodiment of the hopes and aspirations of the new republic he had helped to midwife” (Singh & Hickman, 2013, p. 41). It was the military under his leadership that defended Turkish borders, expelled all invading forces from the Turkish motherland, gained Turkish independence against possible European colonization, and created a new state. His exceptional impact during this period contributed to the idea that soldiers will save the nation yet again if it needs protection. It can be said that Atatürk’s popularity, as a heroic military leader and savior of the state, reflected more generally upon the military of which he was a part.

As Singh and Hickman (2013) describe: “These events caused the nation to put their faith on the military, which they hoped would save the day when things got messy. And, the conscript structure of the Turkish military has reinforced this interpretation of the military” (p. 41).

It should be noted that the later process was managed by well-educated and far-sighted military leaders. These commanders became widely heralded as primary figures in the foundation of the modern Turkish Republic. Indeed, it was the armed forces that triggered the later modernization era. Atatürk and his associates from the military implemented a series of revolutions after they founded the republic. As Atatürk thought



the democracy was the most important character of this new state, he first abolished the sultanate in 1922 even before the declaration of the republic (Tanör, 1981).

The place of democracy was then strengthened by the principle of secularism. Atatürk moved the caliphate away from the political arena along with old religious foundations in daily life. Women were allowed to wear Western clothes and given voting and election rights many years before most of their European counterparts. By these reforms, women gained improved equality with men. The Latin alphabet was accepted as part of a series of educational reforms. Then, the legal system was altered from Sharia law to a modern rule (Tanör, 1981).

Also, being aware of the important relationship between the Turkish military and Turkish society, Atatürk had never been indifferent to this special characteristic of the nation. He always tried to maintain this affiliation. His views, expressed on a special occasion, prove what he tried to implement: “Whenever the Turkish nation has wanted to stride toward the heights, it has always seen its army...as the permanent leader in the forefront of this march. In times to come, also, its heroic sons will march in the vanguard of the sublime ideals of the Turkish nation” (Hale, 1994, p. 81).

After his death, Atatürk’s revolutions continued to enlighten the path of the Turkish nation. These reforms constitute the ideological base of the Turkish Republic, called Kemalism. And, the TAF assumed the role of guarantor of Atatürk’s vision of a secular state. According to Lim (2011), this legitimacy of guarding Kemalism is deeply associated with the nation-building process (p. 5).

Most of the Turkish people also embrace Atatürk’s principles as most important to the republic. At this point, the draft becomes a very influential tool as the TAF teaches the principles of Atatürk to all young men and the story of the nation’s founding. This is why the idea of the military as saviors of the state is readily accepted by most citizens, and why Turkish society has such deep confidence in the TAF. The modern military benefits greatly from its historical role in the independence movement and from its association with extraordinary leaders such as Atatürk (Narlı, 2000, p. 120).

Society's positive perception of the TAF as saviors and Atatürk's influence would also assist the military in attracting the best-qualified individuals in Turkish society if the nation were to adopt an AVF. Although the importance of the draft to create this understanding has been remarkable, it may be a significant force multiplier to invite the best portion of highly-qualified youths. Young men and women influenced by these concepts may become more motivated to enlist in the TAF if an AVF is accepted.

### **3. Service as a Sacred Duty**

In Turkey, the draft is regarded as *vatani görev*, which means duty for the motherland. As Narlı (2000) observes, this concept is deeply rooted in the Turkish culture, and is seen as an inseparable part of the society. Military service is consequently viewed as a home, a "Prophet's hearth" (*Peygamber ocagi*) or "Soldiers' hearth" (*asker ocagi*) (Narlı, 2000, p. 118). For most of the Turkish people, attending to military service is a component of dignity. Young men who honorably complete their service are praised, while those who somehow avoid this responsibility are not treated well in the society.

Moreover, most Turks consider compulsory military service as essentially voluntary. They refrain from identifying it as mandatory service, compulsory service, conscription, or any other term that implies an obligation (Varoğlu & Bıçaksız, 2005, p. 585).

Religious factors also strengthen people's beliefs in this concept, the Turkish nation viewing military service as a national duty and heroic mission. Dying for the nation means martyrdom. Nationalist discourses also strongly praise martyrdom as it means dying on behalf of Islam (Sarigil, 2013, p. 6). Turkish people, following the tenets of Islam, believe that those who die in defense of their country are granted immediate access to Heaven.

One can find countless examples of heroism that are deeply correlated with the idea of service as a sacred duty. These memories are as old as Turkish history itself and go back to the first Turkish States in Asia that cover the pre-Islamic period. As the

examples of heroism are so numerous, the present discussion focuses only on examples in the *Çanakkale* (Gallipoli) War and the Korean War.

The *Çanakkale* War is one of the most important milestones in the establishment of the modern Turkish Republic for two reasons. First, the *Çanakkale* War is an epic of the nation that was written by the noble blood of Turkish youths. It enabled the nation to regain its confidence after a long period of defeats. Second, it presented the founder of the Turkish Republic, Kemal Atatürk, to the nation, as his role changed the course of the war. The Korean War is also very important for Turkey as it was the first time that its military had to fight in a battle after the Independence War. Further, the Korean War served as an example of what the nation's military would do for others who needed help, as opposed to demonstrating what it would sacrifice when the nation itself was at risk.

The Turkish nation attributes great importance to *Çanakkale*. In the first stage of the war, the Turkish military fought against the mightiest navy of the time. Later, it engaged with British forces that tried to capture the peninsula by an amphibious operation. Despite all of these hardships, the military stopped the enemy and prevented Allied forces from invading the Turkish homeland.

The Turkish side experienced around 252,000 men in total casualties, with 57,000 dead (Görgülü, 2014). Because of this heavy burden, the *Çanakkale* War attained significant importance for Turkey. Even today, the anniversary of the war, 18 March, is commemorated as the Martyrs' Day. And, the sacrifices of the nation in *Çanakkale* created the slogan of *Çanakkale Ruhu*, meaning the Spirit of *Çanakkale*, to the nation. Later, this phrase became used in daily life to define the holy power that is needed for accomplishing unattainable achievements (Atlı, 2015).

This spirit is revealed in the incident experienced by Lt. Col. Mustafa Kemal himself, a military genius and division commander during the war, when he saw a group of soldiers who were abandoning their positions. He asked them to explain their behavior, and upon hearing the answer that they abandoned their positions due to a lack of ammunition, Mustafa Kemal gave this historic order:

I do not order you to fight, I order you to die. In the time it takes us to die, other troops and commanders can come and take our places. (Görgülü, 2014, p. 69)

Such an order not only necessitates brave commanders but also soldiers who are loyal to their nation and who can accept an honorable death. This can only be achieved by the idea of sacred duty.

Turkey was one of the largest participants in the Korean War, with nearly 4,500 troops. The human cost of the war for Turkey was 1,000 soldiers killed and 2,000 wounded (Çolakoglu, 2012, p. 131). The Turkish Brigade was a subordinate of the 25th U.S. Infantry Division. Its duty was to protect the supply lines of United Nations (U.N.) forces.

However, the Turkish Brigade played a substantial role in the Battles of Kunuri and Kumyanjangni and earned significant prestige and the recognition of U.N. forces (Lee, 2012, p. 229). After these battles, the United States honored Turkish soldiers with the title of “Distinguished Unit-Station.” The Turks became famous among other nations for their courage and selflessness. The people of Turkey also refer to the Korean War as the Korean Epic (Kore Destanı) (Alkan, 2013, pp. 7–8).

The observations of others, such as American soldier Bob Banker of the 25th Infantry Division, support this point. As Banker puts it, “Having the Brigade on your flank made you feel secure at night” (Alli, 2012, para. 5). Turkish soldiers held in Chinese prison camps also demonstrated loyalty to friends of other nations. As Mary Lee Settle, one American veteran, recalls:

We didn’t know how to look after ourselves, and the Turks took pity on us....My friend was Hakim....When I was sick, he brought me food, and he looked after me as he would have another Turkish person....When our sweaters and socks wore out, they picked the wool apart and reknitted it. ...We had informers among us, and we knew who they were. I still know. The Turks did not have one single informer....When I was so sick I thought I was going to die, Hakim brought me soup and sat with me, and pulled me through it. I think he gave me courage. (Alli, 2012, para. 7)

The concept of military service as a sacred duty could contribute importantly toward supporting an AVF, if Turkey ever moved in that direction. Examples of military

heroism throughout Turkish history are passed on from generation to generation through education in elementary and high schools. Therefore, young Turkish citizens may potentially pay more attention to cultural and religious rhetoric regarding military service, and this may be a huge factor in attracting more motivated individuals to join the TAF.

#### **4. Rituals**

All nations have rituals that reflect the common attitude of people toward a particular event. These traditions simply imply that the place of a specific occasion is highly prestigious and it is deeply respected by society. Draft rituals in Turkey are one of the best examples to support this claim. As the draft in Turkey is widely welcomed by society, various draft rituals have been created to honor it. Although these customs are different depending on the region, they all share a common factor: All indicate that the military draft in Turkey is welcomed by a majority of the people.

For male Turks, three interrelated events significantly mark a personal life. These events represent the steps to prove oneself in becoming a man and earning the right to marry. Turks pay great attention to these customs and celebrate them zealously. The circumcision ceremony is the first, and it is regarded as the initial step toward becoming a man. For this one, obviously, no personal effort is required.

The second step toward manhood is the separation from family for conscription, and then returning home after honorably completing military service. This necessitates great effort and sacrifice on the part of the individual, such as separation from the family and loved ones, hard training, new responsibilities, some limitations on freedom, and sometimes direct involvement in the fight with terrorists, which may lead to the risk of severe injury or even death.

The third and final step toward manhood is marriage. As Varoğlu and Bıçaksız (2005) write, all three events are celebrated together with the participation of family, relatives, and the community. However, it is the traditions relating to military service that get the most attention (Varoğlu & Bıçaksız, 2005, p. 585). One can see celebrations for marriage in every culture without exception. There can be celebrations for circumcision

in some cultures. Yet, it is a distinct feature of Turkish culture to celebrate a young man's departure for and return from obligatory military service.

Naturally, there are regional differences in the sendoff and welcome-home ceremonies. In one of the most widespread practices, draftees are invited to dinner by all their friends and relatives. Some activities of entertainment are also common during and after such celebratory meals, such as chatting, singing, and dancing. Examples below are well known practices in different parts of Turkey and show how the draft is welcomed and respected by most Turks.

In Kars, a province in the eastern part of Turkey, young men pay a farewell visit to their relatives. During the visit, their friends and relatives give them allowances and offer special foods. In *Silifke*, a district in the Mediterranean, young men and their friends enthusiastically enjoy the night just before they are due to leave for military service. Older people leave toward midnight to let younger men enjoy themselves freely and continue to party. During sendoff ceremonies in *Kizilcahamam*, a district in Ankara, people place money in draftees' pockets to bless the prospective soldier (Military Service and Leaving Home, n.d.).

The women in Seydisehir, a district in southwest Turkey, prepare pastries and divide them into threes. One part is thrown away for wild animals as food. A second part is stored at home. And the last one is preserved for the young soldier to savor during travel. The part kept at home is for the soldier to eat when he comes home for leave. Additionally, women come together for lunch just after the farewell ceremony. As it is believed that eating with a wooden spoon will bring bad luck for the young man, no one can use them during the meal (Military Service and Leaving Home, n.d.).

After these ceremonies, friends and families escort the cohort of young men to their departure on the next day. As Varoğlu & Bıçaksız (2005) write:

Just before leaving, everyone hugs them and bids farewell. Fathers recommend them to obey all the orders of their commanders and be the best soldier. Mothers similarly say make me the proud mother of a Turkish soldier while the friends chant the greatest soldier is ours and throw the recruit high in the air several times. (p. 585)

There are also numerous ways to greet the soldiers after they successfully complete their obligation. For nearly two weeks, friends and relatives pay visits to the home of the returned soldier to welcome him. During these visits, henna is applied to the hands of visitors, which is believed to deliver a streak of luck. As he is welcomed as a victor and treated as a guest, the returned soldier is not allowed to do any work at home for a while.

Military service letters are an important part of a young man's life that is associated with the draft in Turkey. Although these letters have more recently lost their importance due to communication through modern technology, they were once an important tool for soldiers to communicate with their families and friends. These letters were written with an ardent desire for home. They would typically begin with compliments for family members and friends, then a talk about daily life in the military, and end with a traditional quatrain.

Of particular importance, only after completing military service can a young man in Turkey become eligible to marry. The draft plays a significant role in the decision of parents when a prospective groom wants to ask the consent of the girl's parents. When the couples want to marry in Turkey, they traditionally inform their parents first. Then, the boy's family pays a visit to the girl's house.

One of first questions that a girl's father will ask is whether the prospective son-in-law has completed his military service. If the boy answers positively, he passes the first test. This is, of course, not required, but it is considered necessary to have the parents' consent. In some cases, the girl's side refuses because the boy cannot meet this criterion. The main reason for this is the common understanding that military service matures young men. Beyond this, it is actually a fact that people often observe and talk to each other when they see the behavioral changes of young men after the draft. Nevertheless, it would be a big mistake to associate this understanding only to cultural factors. No father wants to become responsible again for his daughter when his new son-in-law departs for military service. It becomes an economic burden on the married daughter's family, and nearly all fathers wish to avoid the prospect. A son-in-law's

required departure for service may even damage the relationship between families newly connected by their child's marriage.

## **B. RECENT TRENDS**

Positive opinions of the TAF and the draft in Turkey are highly related. At the same time, a society can easily move between one strong opinion to another. Sometimes, this shift may even be extremely dramatic. Despite the elevated status of the TAF partly through the draft, its ties with the nation may deteriorate in response to an adverse event. If the public starts to question the place of the TAF, then the perception of the draft may change as well. At this point, recent developments both in Turkey and in the world may have influence on the perception of the TAF as a whole and the draft in particular. Some of these trends have been challenging popular respect for the TAF in recent years. And, some of them may raise questions in the future.

### **1. Trials of Service Members for an Alleged Military Coup**

Civil-military relations in Turkey are one of the most complicated in the world and go far back to the Ottoman periods. However, the aim in the present discussion is not to examine the long history of civil-military relations in Turkey. Rather, this section analyzes the effect of trials in the past ten years on perceptions of the TAF and its influence on the draft.

The understanding of civil-military relations in Turkey is the key to see the effect of recent trials on the TAF. The Turkish military has been involved in three military interventions in political life in the past fifty years. These military interventions happened in 1960, 1971, and 1980.

The first military intervention in Turkey happened in 1960. This coincides with the transition to the multi-party system in Turkey. There was a single party in the Turkish parliamentary system, and the Republican People's Party (*CHP*) had been in power since the foundation of the Republic in 1923. It was Atatürk who founded the *CHP* to unite and organize resistance against the invasion of Anatolia in 1919, which later became the symbol of Atatürk's principles.



In 1945, Turkey adopted a multi-party system. And the *CHP* lost the first elections. The incoming party, called the Democrat Party (DP), started to attack Atatürk's principles. The rulers of DP tried to abolish the acquisition of the Republic by attacking secularism and accepting Islamic practices. As a result, the TAF had to intervene in political life on 27 May 1960 (Eryılmaz, 2014). The prime minister, along with two other ministers, was sentenced to death after a nine-month trial.

The second military intervention, called the military memorandum, took place in 1971. Although the military did not execute a military coup, the TAF forced the prime minister to step down by giving a memorandum to the president. The main reason for this military intervention was social unrest in Turkey due to economic problems.

The last military intervention occurred in 1980. The 1980s were among the worst years in Turkey. The country had become destabilized by a clash between right and left movements, the Sunni-Alevi conflict, the assassination of prominent people, including statesmen, journalists, and scholars; and economic turmoil. Because of this instability, the TAF had to intervene in political life (Uygun, 2013). After the coup, the Chief of General Staff became the president. Within two years, a new constitution was prepared and ratified by the nation.

Despite these coups, Turkish society's perception of the military remained positive, due to the military's unique, historical relationship with the nation. For example, Aydın (2009) observes that the TAF has been viewed as the most respected and trusted institution in Turkey despite these several military interventions. This may seem abnormal, but the high level of trust and adherence stems partly from the TAF's conscript structure. A Western scholar, Kinzer (2001), discusses this seeming anomaly:

All young Turkish men must serve in the army, which means that virtually every adult male is a veteran and that most families have had the experience of seeing sons in uniform. Turks do not fear their army or consider it oppressive, the way terrified Africans and Latin Americans did when cruel military dictatorships dominated their societies. Most see it as a benevolent force that has successfully defended Turkey against foreign and domestic enemies, and that truly has the national interest at heart. (p.74)

But, this trust was damaged after the trials of military service members and some civilians for an alleged clandestine organization called “*Ergenekon*” and a military coup called “*Balyoz*” (Sledgehammer) (Akyürek & Yılmaz, 2013, p. 1). Because of these trials, a number of prominent people were imprisoned, including the former Chief of General Staff, generals, officers, and NCOs, along with influential civilians. They were prosecuted because they were accused of conspiring to oust the democratically elected government. Indictments identified plots to destabilize the country and to create a justification for military intervention (Sarigil, 2013).

The *Ergenekon* and *Balyoz* trials started in 2006 and 2010, respectively. When these trials ended, most of the suspects were sentenced to pay a heavy burden. However, in 2014, the Constitutional Court abolished these punishments and ruled that the defendants’ basic rights had been violated during these trials. Further, some documents used in these trials were found to be fictitious (Karar, 2014).

At first, these trials reflected poorly on the Turkish military. As perceptions of the TAF are connected strongly with the draft, these particular events may have adversely affected opinions on military conscription. However, these trials did not play a substantial role in opinions on the draft due to the eventual verdict of the Constitutional Court and the later developments. Additionally, recent polls show that the TAF is still “the most trusted institution” in Turkey (Akyürek & Yılmaz, 2013, p. 10).

## **2. Current Fight against Terror**

Clearly, achieving a strong security environment is the most important objective for any country when deciding on how to structure its military manpower system. Basically, a draft is viewed as best for wartime and an AVF for times of peace. So, a draft for a country such as Turkey, which has struggled against terrorists for over three decades and is located in one of the most geopolitically fragile regions in the world, seems to be a good option.

The country has been fighting with the PKK in the southern part of the state since 1984. In this struggle, 5,500 security forces, 21,800 terrorists, and 1,500 civilians have died. The total death toll is 35,300 (28 Yılın Acı Bilançosu, 2012). The public attitude

toward the draft in the fight against terrorism has been positive, as the draft has distributed the burden for defense equitably among Turkish society. However, some people have recently started to question the efficiency of using draftees in the fight against terrorism.

The use of a conscripted force to fight against terrorism has two major implications for Turkish society. The first of these relates to efficiency. The second implication relates to the equal distribution of the defense burden across the Turkish population. The present discussion focuses on the issue of efficiency in using the draft to fight against terrorists. The next chapter evaluates the equity issue, which involves the equal distribution of the price of this fight among the society.

The main argument of opponents of the draft is that the draft is the weakest link in the fight against terrorism, as it uses inexperienced young soldiers to participate through mandatory obligation (Akyürek, 2010, p. 29). Draftees are claimed to be an inefficient means of sustaining the fight with terror as they are inexperienced and do not have sufficient training (Tanyol, 2012, p. 164). A recent study supports this understanding. Nearly 66 percent of Turkish society believes that losses in the fight against terrorism constitute one of the most important reasons to negatively affect popular views of the TAF (Akyürek & Yılmaz, 2013, p. 22).

Akyürek (2010) also finds an analogy between reactions in American society after the Vietnam War and recent criticisms of the TAF (2010, p. 21). Actually, sociopolitical forces and public opinion after the Vietnam War triggered the eventual demise of the military draft in the United States. Despite this similarity, in Turkey, there is huge difference of opinion on the legitimacy of the Vietnam War and the fight against terrorism. Nevertheless, criticisms of the way in which the Turkish military is fighting against terrorism may help the TAF in determining the efficiency of the draft for the years ahead.

The TAF has not been indifferent to this issue and has made some important changes in the structure of units participating in the fight. For example, it recently increased the number of professional personnel in troops fighting with terrorists and

modified training standards. Contracting privates have been employed for this purpose (The Contracting Private Act, 2011).

### **3. Women's Participation**

The Turkish nation has never supported drafting women for the TAF. Women have participated historically in the TAF as officers and, more recently, as petty officers. Consequently, the present discussion focuses on women's participation in TAF from a historical perspective, and more specifically, as officers.

Turkey is committed to promoting women's rights. This goes back to the foundation of Turkey when Atatürk and his friends conducted a series of political and legal reforms to build a modern, secular state. As Arat (1996) observes, the revolutions of the republic made great contributions to women's rights and transformed the status of women in Turkey. These reforms radically changed the status and conditions of women in the country to an extent that has never been seen in any Muslim country in the world. Along with civil rights, Turkish women were also given equal political rights even before several other European nations (Müftüler-Baç, 1999, p. 303).

When it comes to military service, however, it took many more years for women to serve in positions within the TAF. However, Turkish women have historically proven themselves by voluntarily taking part in the defense of the country and in showing the same power and courage as men when necessary. Nene Hatun is one of the best examples of a woman who fought courageously during the Ottoman-Russian War in 1878 (Nene Hatun, n.d.). Turkish women also took an active role in the First World War, taking on diverse jobs from providing nursery services to, in some cases, fighting in combat. Women likewise contributed to the Independence War, performing a number of roles in the military while demonstrating unsurpassed heroism.

Sabiha Gökçen is perhaps one of the most important historical figures to show what a Turkish woman can do in the military. She became the first female combat pilot in the world. Throughout her career in the Turkish Air Force, she flew different types of aircraft for thousands of hours and actively took part in combat and bombardment

missions. In 1996, the U.S. Air Force selected her as one of the twenty greatest aviators in world history (Demir & Gamm, 2007).

The participation of women in the military is mostly viewed as an issue closely related to secularism. The military, as a loyal follower of Atatürk and his principles, has been a devoted supporter of applying this principle. The application of secularism itself, which dictates the separation of religious and state affairs, has enabled the country to enjoy privileges that most of the other Muslim nations have not. The active participation of women in the workforce is viewed as one of the most fundamental characteristics of secularism. Thus, the military, as a follower of Atatürk, has given utmost attention to women's participation.

Women in Turkey were accepted for the first time to the military academies in 1955. However, the education of female cadets was abolished in 1960. The recruitment of women to military ranks restarted in 1982, although they were assigned mostly to combat service support positions. They were also assigned as officers to serve in military hospitals in those years. In the 1990s, the military started to accept female civilian university graduates. After a three-month basic training, they were appointed to military ranks in non-combatant positions (Toktas, 2004, p. 257).

The TAF resumed accepting women to military academies in 1992. As a result of this progress, the first female officers graduated from service academies in 1996. Since then, women officers have been serving in all branches except the infantry, armor, and on submarines. Although women serve mostly in combat service support positions such as ordinance, transportation, personnel, and quartermaster, women officers have been taking part in combat support positions such as intelligence, artillery, air defense, and engineering. Some female fighter pilots have also successfully followed the path of Gökçen (Yalçın, 2015).

Today, in the TAF, there are 1,350 female officers and 843 female NCOs. The TAF expects to increase the proportion of female officers and NCOs 5 percent (from 3.3 percent and 0.9 percent, respectively). The TAF employs 596 female senior officers above the rank of major (Gurcan, 2014).

Additionally, more female officers gained access to the War Colleges in recent years and have become staff officers. Staff officers are War College graduates, and only staff officers in Turkey can be promoted to the rank of general. Turkey has never had a female general or admiral in the TAF, and it will not occur at least until the first War College female graduates have become eligible for promotion evaluation. In the years to come, it is expected that Turkey will see a female general or admiral in the TAF.

Women in Turkey can serve in any position, both in the private and public sector, but not as a draftee in the military. The current conscription law, dating back to 1927, states that military service is only mandatory for male citizens. So, women cannot serve as a draftee under present law. However, an interesting event occurred during the approval of this law. As Altınay (2004) writes: “The Act of 1927 was passed without much debate in the Grand National Assembly, except for a short but very significant discussion at the very beginning” (p.33). When the first article of the law that obligated every male citizen to perform military service was suggested, Hakkı Tarık Bey, a member of the parliament, raised the question about women’s service:

Sir, we see that here and there women are engaged in suffrage activities, asking for election rights. I personally believe that women should get this right. It is only a matter of time. ... If voting and becoming a candidate is a national issue, participating in the country’s defense is also a similar right, a similar duty. I realize that the first article of the compulsory military service law has only included men. I would like to ask whether you have taken women’s services into consideration, or to what extent. [TBMM Zabıt Ceridesi] (Altınay, 2004, p. 33)

The responses to his inquiry acknowledged that women were capable of fighting and performing military service. Women were praised for their role in the Independence War, and legislators expressed confidence that Turkish women had the ability to do the same, if needed (Altınay, 2004, p. 33). Since then, women’s conscription has never been brought forth to the public agenda. Even more interesting, as Toktas (2004) asserts, it has never been addressed as a political issue. Turkish civil society organizations and social movements, such as feminism, did not consider the issue relevant enough for discussion (Toktas, 2004, p. 258). The reason for this may be a common understanding that military

service is primarily an obligation rather than a right of citizenship to be gained by female rights activists.

Despite historical facts—women’s participation in the military during the early years of the republic, the remarkable achievements of women in the Turkish military (such as those of Gökçen), and recent targets to increase the involvement of women in the TAF—women’s participation is still proportionately low, given the potential in the general population. The next chapter evaluates women’s potential participation as draftees by drawing comparisons between the U.S. military and analyzing some statistics on women in Turkey.

#### **4. Conscientious Objection**

The issue of conscientious objection is a new development for Turkish society. As a matter of fact, an overwhelmingly significant proportion of the Turkish population seems to have little or no interest in this issue. At the same time, it may become more important, as Turkey continues to wage its fight with terrorists, a fight that has continued for over three decades. This phenomenon could adversely affect society’s perceptions of compulsory service, if it ever gained momentum.

The implications of conscientious objection include legal arrangements, social factors, and the security environment. This section discusses only the legal arrangements of conscientious objection. To review the argument more comprehensively, the next chapter focuses on social factors and the security environment in Turkey. The discussion regarding the legal basis for conscientious objection includes international and internal regulations along with international institutions.

Conscientious objection in the present context relates to a person’s refusal to serve in the military because of deeply-held moral values or principles. These include religious beliefs, philosophy, morality, or political ideology (Lipman, 1990, p. 31). This is one of the most interesting issues with respect to a person’s rights when such values conflict with the obligations of citizenship.

Compulsory military service has been a controversial issue in many countries throughout history. It is also viewed historically as a necessity of citizenship. However, international society mostly agrees that the right of conscientious objection should be accepted. Proponents of this issue also claim that states should provide an alternative type of service for citizens who wish to fulfill their citizenship obligation but refuse to participate involuntarily in the military.

Unlike most European states, Turkey has not yet acknowledged conscientious objection. Although it is a new topic in Turkey, conscientious objection has been receiving attention in recent years. In Turkey, the first incident regarding this issue occurred in 1989. Although no clear data shows the total number of conscientious objectors in Turkey, a website claims it is 400, including women (Türkiye’de Vicdani Ret, n.d.).

***a. International Regulations***

Although the history of conscientious objection dates back hundreds of years, the most important legal bases are found in the Nuremberg Principle IV, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the Handbook on Procedures and Criteria for Determining Refugee Status (Takemura, 2009).

The Nuremberg Principle IV (1950) states that “The fact that a person acted pursuant to order of his government or of a superior does not relieve him from responsibility under international law, provided a moral choice was in fact possible to him” (p. 2). Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) states, “Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance” (p. 7).



Article 171 of The Handbook on Procedures and Criteria for Determining Refugee Status (2011) declares the following:

Not every conviction, genuine though it may be, will constitute a sufficient reason for claiming refugee status after desertion or draft-evasion. It is not enough for a person to be in disagreement with his government regarding the political justification for a particular military action. Where, however, the type of military action, with which an individual does not wish to be associated, is condemned by the international community as contrary to basic rules of human conduct, punishment for desertion or draft-evasion could, in the light of all other requirements of the definition, in itself be regarded as persecution. (p.34)

As these quotations imply, international law obviously provides a legal basis for conscientious objection. However, a nation's citizens cannot directly benefit from this privilege just because the international community respects it. It may require either a domestic codification or an international mechanism to force states to accept the legitimacy of this right.

***b. Internal Regulations***

As Turkey does not recognize conscientious objection, there is no special codification for this purpose in the Turkish legal system. Thus, all conscientious objectors are treated like other male citizens when they are called for compulsory military service. However, three regulations in Turkey indirectly cover this issue. These are the Turkish Constitution, the Turkish Recruitment Act, and the Turkish Punishment Act.

The 72nd article of the Turkish Constitution states that military service can be performed either in the armed forces or in public service. It also declares that the application of compulsory service is regulated by law (The Turkish Constitution, 1982). So, no obstacle to conscientious objection appears in the constitution; therefore, it does not need any amendment in the Turkish Constitution. At the same time, the 72nd article of the Turkish Constitution cites the Turkish Recruitment Act, which obligates all Turkish male citizens to perform a military service at military installations (The Turkish Recruitment Act, 1969). From this point of view, all male citizens have to complete a military service. Finally, the 318th article of the Turkish Punishment Act (Code No 5237)

stipulates that people who discourage citizens from serving in the military are liable to punishment from six months to two years in prison (The Turkish Punishment Act, 2004).

If a liable citizen does not want to fulfill his obligation by claiming conscientious objection, he can be tried under the Turkish Punishment Act. Even if he completes his term in prison, he will not be exempt from military service. However, citizens have the right to seek justice in international organizations, such as the European Court of Human Rights, if they believe their basic rights have been violated (Merrills, 1993).

### *c. International Institutions*

An international organization that has significance regarding conscientious objection trials in Turkey is the European Court of Human Rights. As a full member of the European Council since 1949, Turkey recognizes the decisions of the European Court of Human Rights. Once a domestic trial is completed in Turkey, anyone, regardless of nationality, has right to apply to this court. The court cannot cancel the decision of Turkish courts. However, as article 5 of the Convention Right to Liberty and Security states, it may sentence the country to pay compensation to applicants if his or her rights are violated (2014).

In recent years, the European Court of Human Rights has become a significant player for Turkey with its decisions on conscientious objection. For example, the court sentenced the country to pay compensation to those people who claimed Turkey did not recognize one of their most fundamental rights and violated freedom of thought and religion.

The monetary burden of these sentences is not high for Turkey. However, these recent convictions may expand the legitimacy of conscientious objection in Turkey in the future. Moreover, they may create increasing international pressure for a revised policy within the country.

## **C. CONCLUSION**

Understanding the place of the military in Turkish culture amid global and domestic developments are key to impartially evaluating the draft in Turkey. Therefore,

this chapter analyzes some concepts related to the elevated status of the TAF and recent trends regarding military service in the world and in the country.

The TAF has attained highly-praised status within Turkish society due to the role it has played throughout history. In this process, interactions of the military with the nation through the draft created and consolidated unique perceptions regarding the military nation, soldiers as the saviors of the state, and service as a sacred duty. Traditional rituals that celebrate a young man's military service support these concepts. The views of foreign scholars also support the legitimacy of these ideas. Consequently, abolishing the draft may deteriorate the ties of the TAF with the Turkish nation in the long term. However, these concepts may prove to be very useful tools in attracting the best qualified young men to serve voluntarily under an AVF.

Even though the link between the TAF with the nation is very strong, it can easily shift from one direction to another. At some point, this could dramatically influence public opinion toward the draft. Indeed, certain recent developments in Turkey, such as the trials of military service members for an alleged military coup and the lengthy fight against terrorism, demonstrate that the Turkish military's reputation is not completely insulated from negative publicity. Although trials adversely affected popular views of the TAF initially, later developments enabled the Turkish military to regain public confidence.

The ongoing struggle with terrorism may also have some aftereffects regarding attitudes toward conscription, as Turkish society has been paying a heavy price over many years. One issue that has emerged involves the use of inexperienced soldiers provided through the draft. Because of this criticism, the TAF increased the number of professional soldiers and has started to employ contracting privates. This chapter also analyzes ongoing trends in the world, such as women's participation in the military and conscientious objection. Although Turkey has been a pioneer in promoting women's rights and women's participation in the military as officers, employment of women in the enlisted ranks has never gained popularity, or even much attention, in Turkey. An AVF may potentially increase women's participation in the military. However, we do not yet know the potential for women's participation in the Turkish military because of historical

and legal limitations on service that have kept the proportion of female volunteers at relatively low levels.

Finally, this chapter examines legal issues relating to conscientious objection. Conscientious objection has attained significance in the Western world, but is not recognized by Turkey. Thus far, Turkish society has not taken the issue seriously, partly because of its social implications and the wide acceptance of conscription. Moreover, the security environment of Turkey is quite different than in countries that recognize this right.

The next chapter evaluates the Turkish draft by using the PRM. It is divided into three parts, based on the three principal components of the PRM: political legitimacy, social equity, and military effectiveness.

#### **IV. EVALUATION OF THE DRAFT IN TURKEY**

This chapter evaluates the draft system in Turkey by using the Population Representation Model (PRM) developed by Mark J. Eitelberg (1979) during the early years of America's All-Volunteer Force (AVF). Since the PRM was designed originally to evaluate and better understand population representation in the U.S. military, especially after the end of American military conscription in 1973, lessons learned from the experiences of the U.S. Armed Forces may prove useful in assessing the current situation in Turkey. Obviously, all lessons from the United States cannot be applied directly to the Turkish military, or to any other military, because of each country's unique cultural factors, differences in the security environment, geographic variables, and other factors. However, these lessons can be viewed as a historical bench mark and a comparative case to evaluate similar issues facing the Turkish military.

After some years of painful adjustment, and a time when it seemed the nation might even return to conscription, the adoption of an AVF in the United States is seen by most to have vastly improved the U. S. military's capabilities (Rostker, 2006). At the outset, the new military was comprised of professional soldiers who joined of their own volition and were compensated more fairly for their military service. As with any drastic change, the AVF suffered some growing pains during its first decade, experiencing problems in recruiting and retaining highly-qualified volunteers (Rostker, 2006). During these early years, critics emerged on all political and academic fronts, raising serious concerns over possible social and security problems created by the AVF. A number of social scientists, legislators, and media commentators identified an ideological gap between U.S. society and the military because the military appeared to no longer represent the American population (Eitelberg, 1976; Eitelberg, 1979). Recognizing this trend and its potential consequences for the future of the AVF, Eitelberg (1979) sought to develop a conceptual approach toward understanding the various dimensions of population representation in the nation's military through the PRM.

One important goal of the PRM is to examine demographic and social representation in the U.S. military, and to determine whether this representation falls

within tolerable limits. Unfortunately, it cannot offer numeric values and limits for what might be considered proper representation. However, it provides guidance for better social and military outcomes according to measures of the model. The model includes three major dimensions: political legitimacy, social equity, and military effectiveness (Eitelberg, 1979, p. 100).

The debate over whether a military should be comprised of citizen-soldiers, drawn to serve by a sense of duty from all quarters of society, or professionals, drawn to serve for a combination of purely personal and patriotic reasons, addresses a main component of political legitimacy. There is obviously an important difference between these two approaches in terms of political legitimacy: one requires that persons serve in the military as a citizenship obligation, or a call of civic duty, while the other leaves military service to the will of career-oriented individuals. Political legitimacy also implies that the absence of broad representation of a nation's population may create a military force that is not demographically representative of the country as a whole, acting somewhat of its own will, drifting apart from the nation socially, culturally, ideologically, as well as politically. Thus, military service may fall upon a small proportion of persons in the general population, and it may no longer be within the watchful eyes of its civilian masters or the people it serves. It is not surprising to observe different consequences of a draft and an AVF regarding political legitimacy. The most essential concerns over political legitimacy entail diminished civilian control over the military, the increased potential for military adventurism, and declining popular awareness or trust in the military (Eitelberg, 1979; Eitelberg & Binkin, 1982; Eitelberg, 1989).

Should a military represent all segments of a society in some proportional balance or reflection of groups in the larger population? Although a draft cannot guarantee equal representation across all social or demographic segments, this concern gains more attention with the adoption of an AVF. Chief among issues involving social equity of the AVF is the representation of racial/ethnic minorities, persons of different economic means or social class, and women. The social equity discussion peaked in the early 1980s for the AVF when it was found that African Americans were joining the U.S. military at levels that were two or three times more than their representation in the general

population (Binkin & Eitelberg, 1982). Again, during periods of conflict, critics questioned whether the AVF spread the burdens of war fairly across all segments of society, largely racially and socioeconomically. This particular element of population representation has focused mainly on the military participation of minorities and women, the rights of persons with other demographic backgrounds, sexual orientation, and conscientious objection (Eitelberg, 1989).

Clearly, a strong and effective national defense is the most important reason for forming a military. This goal has been the ultimate objective of nations since ancient times. However, the role of manpower procurement in achieving military effectiveness has become a significant issue in the past three decades partly because of the adoption of an AVF. A manpower procurement system—whether compulsory, all-volunteer, or a mixed method—can influence the effectiveness of a military in several different ways. These generally include the quality of enlistees, interpersonal relationships, unit cohesion, personnel turnover rates, and cost-effective manpower management (Eitelberg, 1989).

Despite recent trends in the Western world, Turkey has not initiated any action to radically change its recruitment model since its establishment. At present, the Turkish Armed Forces (TAF) are comprised of mostly draftees along with professionals such as officers, non-commissioned officers, specialists, and contracting privates. Turkey's geographic location compels it to have strong, effective, and deterrent military forces both for internal and external uses. However, the effectiveness of the Turkish military has been questioned recently by a number of scholars due to the draft (Akyürek, 2010, p. 29).

Nonetheless, abolishing Turkey's draft in the hopes of improving its military effectiveness may produce irreversible side effects to negatively influence Turkish society as well as many important functions of the TAF. As the TAF has longstanding historical ties with the Turkish nation, mainly through its system of universal male conscription, fixing potential problems created by the draft can have both direct and indirect implications for Turkish society. This makes restructuring or removing the existing draft quite complicated and controversial. In this context, the goal in this chapter

is to find tolerable limits within the PRM for the TAF to increase its effectiveness and, at the same time, achieve political legitimacy while maintaining social equity.

The evaluation of the Turkish draft in this chapter compares the pros and cons of a draft versus an AVF, based on each element of the PRM. Then, the discussion seeks to identify and examine any lessons learned from experiences within the American AVF. Finally, the chapter explores the situation in Turkey, weighing the potential costs and benefits of abandoning the current draft for an alternative system of voluntary service.

## **A. POLITICAL LEGITIMACY**

A military power should obviously have legitimacy, and nearly all scholars are in agreement on this. However, when it comes to the most effective manpower model to achieve this objective, their views mostly clash and include more subjective arguments. Actually, the Congressional Budget Office (1989) sees political legitimacy as the most subjective element of the PRM. The debate converges mostly on whether the military should be populated predominantly with citizen-soldiers or professionals (Eitelberg, 1976; Eitelberg, 1979). Thus, it is very difficult to decide whether a draft or an AVF is best-suited for a particular country without delving deeply into its origin, laws, governmental principles, culture, and historical tradition.

Despite different perspectives, armed forces manned with citizen-soldiers who broadly represent society are claimed to have greater legitimacy than those filled with career-oriented soldiers who may only partially represent the nation's social fabric (Eitelberg, 1976; Eitelberg, 1979). Concerns over political legitimacy, for the most part, center on civilian control over the military, military adventurism, and public trust in the military (Eitelberg, 1979; Eitelberg & Binkin, 1982; Eitelberg, 1989).

Proponents of the draft assert that civilian control over the military is best achieved through a military system comprised of citizen-soldiers while supporters of an AVF emphasize the availability of other mechanisms within democratic institutions to achieve this goal (Eitelberg, 1976). But, nearly all scholars recognize the increased potential for military adventurism with an AVF. As the society is not broadly represented within the military, it is more likely that citizens pay less attention to foreign policy



issues or other domestic and international conditions that may lead to war (Eitelberg, 1979, p. 4). This may place more power in the hands of those who control how and when to employ the military. In simple terms, the families, friends, and acquaintances of those who may be placed in harm's way will take generally greater interest in how a military is funded, managed, trained, and used, particularly when and where it goes to war. As for public trust in the military, a draft seems to be more transparent and capable of providing more immediate feedback to society if it produces a force that is reasonably representative of the society it serves. At the same time, the feedback can be positive or negative, as occurred in the United States during the later years of the Vietnam draft. Additionally, society may put more trust in an effective military manned with career-oriented soldiers than in a less effective military manned with reluctant draftees and those who are minimally qualified.

The implications of political legitimacy for Turkey are contentious. The country is one of the most democratic in the Muslim world, despite military interventions in the recent past (Lewis, 1994, p. 45). The geographical location of the country provides ample opportunity for military adventurism. And, based on population surveys, the TAF has been historically the most trusted institution in the country (Varol, 2012, p. 303). The following discussion looks more closely at democracy, military adventurism, and public trust within the Turkish military.

## **1. Democracy**

The role of the military can sometimes be a challenge for democratic consolidation. Military interruptions historically have threatened democratic institutions in many countries. In this context, the role of democracy in achieving political legitimacy basically coincides with civilian control over the military. However, whether a draft or an AVF is best suited for a democracy is a controversial issue, and there is no clear way to answer the question. Proponents and opponents of both systems support different claims, and each offer a strong case.

Proponents of the draft assert that effective civilian control over the military is best achieved when the military is an integral part of the whole social fabric, which

transports civilian sensibilities into the armed forces through informal networks (Eitelberg, 1979, p. 258). However, supporters of an AVF focus mainly on the difficulty of establishing a connection between military professionalism and military intervention in politics. Moreover, they state that there is always a way to maintain this relationship by means other than a representative military (Eitelberg, 1976, p. 18; U.S. Congressional Budget Office, 1989, p. 13).

Turkey's modern history offers some insights toward better understanding the role of a manpower procurement system in establishing civilian control over military. Civil-military relations in Turkey are rather complicated, although Turkey is one of the rare democratic states in the Muslim world. Indeed, the country has a deeply-rooted democracy embedded into its constitution with laws that enforce equity through a compulsory sharing of burdens and obligations for every male citizen. Turkey has embraced these values since its establishment in 1923. McCarthy (1983, pp. 139–140) writes that socioeconomic changes, led by Atatürk, created a professional, technical, managerial, and entrepreneurial middle class that cemented democratic values with Turkish society.

One may question the status of democracy in Turkey by basically referring to the military interventions into political life over the past five decades. However, any explanation without considering the unique situation of the country would be one-sided. So, answering this question necessitates a basic understanding of the distinct characteristics of these interventions or military coups and the TAF's role as a guarantor of secularism, the most fundamental element of Kemalism.

Military coups in Turkey are said to be much different than in the rest of the world in that they were aimed primarily at promoting democracy, not replacing it. Lewis (1994) observes that the Turkey has never become a country of consecutive coups d'état. On the contrary, after each intervention, Turkey embraced democracy at the earliest convenience and never became a country of long-time dictators.

Additionally, secularism has always been the most significant feature of Turkish democracy. As the TAF is alleged to assume a guarantor role for this principle

(Rear, 2014, p. 10; Sarigil, 2013, p. 2), it became one of the leading forces for intervention. It is almost impossible to have a democracy without laicism as the source of legitimacy, for each is basically different: one depends on the will of people while the other is built upon rule of God. This is more than evident in the differences between Turkey and the rest of Muslim states. Because of its secular structure, religion and state affairs are fundamentally separated in Turkey, through which the country has preserved its modern characteristics.

The influence of manpower procurement models on democracy is hard to establish, especially for a country such as Turkey. We cannot estimate whether a draft or an AVF is best suited for Turkey's democracy partly because of the difficulty of finding an empirical study. Moreover, military coups in Turkey do not conform to those in other countries (Aydınlı, 2009, pp.583–584), which makes the issue even more complicated. Nevertheless, we can draw some conclusions from what happened in Turkey's recent past.

First, military interventions in Turkey clash somewhat with Eitelberg's (1979) assertion that a draft can be more effective for civilian control when the military is an integral part of society. Turkey experienced three military coups, although it always had a system of universal conscription for men. At the same time, Eitelberg (1979) makes a strong case in that Turkey's draft played an attenuating role during these military interventions. Despite these interruptions, the Turkish nation never considered its military as oppressive due to the draft. In fact, Turkey's military interventions served as a vehicle for preserving and promoting democracy. Additionally, the military draft throughout many decades of use has created the idea that the TAF and the Turkish nation are inseparable (Sarigil, 2013, p. 3).

Within the second hypothesis of supporters of an AVF, it is assumed that Turkey has been progressing with big steps toward full civilian control over the military. However, this is not an overnight phenomenon, and democracy needs certain conditions to flourish. Civilian control over the military is a minor part of a matured democracy. Democratic culture needs some time to build strong mechanisms for checks and balances.

## **2. Military Adventurism**

One of the biggest concerns of an AVF is its potential to for military adventurism. This originates mostly from the likelihood that foreign policy may not be a top concern for a nation's population, since large and differing segments of society may not be represented in the military well enough to have "skin in the game" (Eitelberg, 1979, pp. 4, 261). As a result, many scholars see the increased likelihood of military adventurism as a strong argument against an AVF. This concern had been listed as one of the five major issues of ending the draft by Gates Commission in 1970 (Eikenberry, 2013, p. 10). Since then, scholars have paid great attention to military adventurism. More recently, scholars have proposed that the United States might not have engaged in one of its longest wars, beginning with the invasion of Iraq in March 2003 and extending well into 2010. Indeed, some argue that the war might have been avoided or conducted far differently if more people in the United States had a vested interest in it through the service of their sons, daughters, friends, or neighbors (Kitfield, 2014). As it was, the war in Iraq was fought by a small fraction of the American population, while many military members were required to serve multiple deployments during the long conflict (Keim & Vasilas, 2010). Eitelberg (1979) claims that an irritant draft that necessitates the recruitment and training of young men from all layers in a society may become an influential tool in questioning the necessity of war. At this point, lifting the draft may remove awareness among middle-class parents and relatives. He calls this the "lightning rod effect" of conscription (Eitelberg, 1979, pp. 260–261). Segal agrees that a draft can spread the responsibility of war more equitably throughout society, thus influencing the public to become more informed regarding the use of military force, while encouraging politicians to concentrate on diplomacy (The Draft, 2015). It is important to bear in mind that the power of a draft to raise levels of interest and awareness in the national population is dependent on how well the draft distributes the burdens of defense throughout the population. In U.S. history, most applications of the draft, with the exception of the Second World War, have favored the drafting of men from lower socioeconomic classes through exemptions, deferments, and other avenues of avoidance for wealthier citizens (Lewis, 2012).

The Turkish nation has been well aware historically of what constitutes military adventurism. It was the ultimate reason that led to the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. Dreams of the Young Turks, a political movement in the late twentieth century, forced the Ottomans into the First World War despite the will of the nation. The modern Turkish Republic actually emerged as a reaction to Dreams of the Young Turks. Being a responsible statesman, Atatürk abstained from following an adventurist foreign practice and pursued the policy of, “Peace at home, peace in the world” (Göl, 1992, pp. 57, 70).

Atatürk also accused the Ottomans of having launched various wars that became a disaster for the country. Therefore, his foreign policy never sought to enlarge the national territory encompassed by the armistice line of 1918. Also, the Treaty of Lausanne in 1924 realized the goal of national borders determined by the National Pact in 1920 (Zürcher, 2010). As a result, there was no reason for Turkey to follow the path of military adventurism. However, some observers have claimed Turkey’s involvement in the Korean War amounted to military adventurism (Akkaya, 2012).

Turkey’s involvement in the Korean War may appear as military adventurism at first glance, especially considering the physical distance between Korea and Turkey. However, Turkey’s support of the Korean War coincided with Soviet threats to Turkey. The Soviet Union seriously threatened Turkey, particularly claiming control over the Turkish Straits in the 1950s. As a result, the country sought a NATO alliance, and the Korean War was an opportunity for Turkey to achieve this goal. Turkey’s engagement in the war enabled it to join NATO, after which the Soviet Union had to abandon its claims over the country. Public opinion at the time also supported Turkey’s involvement in the Korean War. So, it would be very difficult to claim that Turkey’s participation amounted to military adventurism.

Despite refraining from military adventurism up to the present, Turkey’s geography may prove a big challenge and a hazard of a potential war in the future. The location of the country is so volatile that it could become involved in a war in a matter of minutes. Recent developments since the Syrian Civil War have proved the seriousness of the problem. For example, in June 2012, Syria shot down one Turkish jet claimed to intercept in Syrian airspace. In March 2013, Turkey retaliated by targeting a Syrian jet for

the same reason. Turkey hit another Syrian air vehicle for violating its airspace in May 2015. In November 2015, a Turkish F-16 hit a Russian jet for the same reason which later escalated tensions between the two countries. So, the location of Turkey poses a big risk of war and does not hold any risk of military adventurism.

The type of military manpower in preventing military adventurism may become an important tool for a country such as Turkey, situated in the middle of a war-torn region. Ultra-nationalist rhetoric sometimes claims to be an important political tool to manipulate the public into seeing their country as a predominantly military nation. People's sensitivity may easily be manipulated in the case of an AVF. At this point, Turkey's military draft may force decision makers to follow diplomacy rather than wage a war.

### **3. Confidence in Military**

It is essential for a military to maintain its ties with the society it serves. Trust in the military is one of the key mechanisms to achieve this goal. Confidence in armed forces consolidates the relationship between the military and society, solidifying the legitimacy of the military force (Smith, 1983, p. 281). Consequently, democratic nations have devoted great effort to preserving this relationship.

Numerous factors can affect public trust in the military, and that trust may be extremely unstable depending on immediate circumstances. However, it can be said that a society is generally more likely to trust a military that demonstrates its effectiveness. So, achieving this goal through effectiveness seems to be the shortest way for a military to gain public trust. At this point, manpower procurement models may become of considerable interest, since a draft and an AVF may have different consequences.

As noted, an effective military, whether it is draft or an AVF, has greater potential than an ineffective one to gain the confidence of its public. America's AVF seems to prove this point. Annual Gallup surveys over the past three decades indicate that the American public trusts the U.S. military more than any other institution in the country. Interestingly, the public tends to trust the military even when it engages unsuccessfully in a military operation. In fact, the highest levels of public confidence in the U.S. military

coincide with its action in the first Persian Gulf War, a relatively brief conflict, and the more recent, relatively long engagements in Afghanistan and Iraq, which ended with a controversial outcome (Jones, 2011).

The level of influence a manpower procurement system exerts on public confidence in the military depends on various factors. However, it mostly relates to the isolation of the military from the society and broad representation of the population in the military. Holding everything constant, an AVF comprised of professional soldiers is basically less likely to gain the confidence of society than an equitable draft that represents the national population. With an AVF, the existence of an ideological gap between military and society may isolate the military from the nation (Janowitz, 1975, p. 432). It may also negatively influence the relationship, as it does not necessarily require broader social representation. However, an equitable draft does not have any potential to create an ideological gap if nearly all segments of society are directly or indirectly represented in the military. Theoretically, a draft can also ensure a much broader representation of the population, which promotes the public's evaluation of military service through feedback. On the other hand, as Eitelberg (1979) points out, accurate representation of the general population in the military may mean that the military would need to accept recruits who are significantly less qualified than those who are enlisted under an AVF. For example, in the case of the U.S. military, returning to an equitable form of conscription would require that the military accept a large proportion of persons who are considered ineligible for service under the AVF because of their very low scores on the military's entrance test. Eventually, this might reduce the military's effectiveness, thus lowering public confidence.

The Turkish nation, as the United States, puts the highest level of confidence in its military (Narlı, 2003, p. 37). This trust mainly originates from factors discussed in the previous chapter. These include the military nation, soldiers as saviors of the state and the Atatürk effect, service as a sacred duty, and rituals. The draft has been the most essential element of this relationship, as it enabled an assessment of the TAF by the people through its draftees. However, this relationship also has the potential to negatively influence the

relationship. A negative perception of a draftee may damage this trust at the end of his service.

## **B. SOCIAL EQUITY**

Historically, defending a country is accepted as one of the most fundamental obligations of citizenship. Every citizen must be prepared to fight for his or her country when necessary (Eitelberg, 1979, p. 73). The military draft was applied widely throughout the Western world in modern times because it could provide a state of readiness easily using large military forces. Before the technological revolution, short-term draftees, citizen-soldiers, could be employed without the need for much training. As military tasks became more complicated, and associated training became more costly, it became apparent that military efficiency and effectiveness extended well beyond the need for sheer numbers of minimally-trained men. This realization, along with a changing strategic landscape, convinced many advanced nations to end military conscription and rely on smaller forces filled with more highly-capable and well-trained volunteers. Smaller militaries, defending increasingly larger populations, raised new concern over an age-old question: “Who shall serve when not all serve?” According to Eitelberg (1979, p. 279) and others, this question is at the heart of all debates and continuing arguments regarding the social composition of the military (Eitelberg, 1979, p. 269; U.S. Congressional Budget Office, 1989, p. 8).

Simply stated, an equitable system of military service demands that the benefits and burdens of national defense be distributed proportionately throughout society (Eitelberg, 1979, p. 185). A military draft does not threaten social equity if all citizens are equally likely to serve in the military. Theoretically, in an equitable draft, every citizen, male or female, would enjoy nearly the same benefits and be exposed to the same risks of military service. Of course, applications of the draft historically have excluded persons in various categories, most notably women, and created loopholes for other qualified citizens to avoid compulsory service.

In an AVF, population representation is typically harder to achieve largely because of higher selection standards and total dependence on all-volunteer recruiting. As



a result, all-volunteer systems have been exposed to even greater scrutiny by those who consider social equity important, and particularly during periods of war. Social equity is one of the most important foundations in creating a fair system of military service for citizens in a democracy, and many take notice when certain layers of the social order are exposed to greater risks and responsibilities than others (Eitelberg, 1976, p. 11). On the other hand, it also raises some questions over the benefits of military service, especially during periods of peace, as serving in the military naturally confers some privileges.

Turkey does not have serious threats to social equity under its current draft system. On the other hand, if Turkey adopted an AVF, it could threaten social equity, as the country has a Kurdish population. The ongoing fight with PKK, a Kurdish terrorist organization, may even deteriorate the situation. At this point, the representation of subgroups and the benefits and burdens of military service may become of significant interest in Turkey. Also, female representation and conscientious objection could become more important over the years, regardless of whether Turkey has a draft or an AVF. Therefore, this section looks more closely at the representation of minorities, the benefits and burdens of military service, women's participation, and conscientious objection.

### **1. Representation of Minorities/Subgroups**

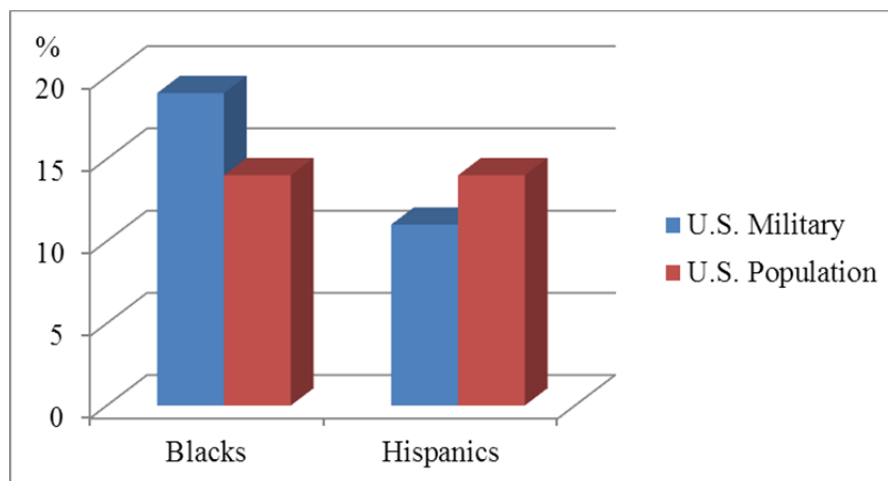
Proportional representation of minorities/subgroups has been one of the most significant issues of debate about whether a draft or an AVF is the best way to man a military. Proponents of a draft or an AVF focus on different aspects of the argument. Draft supporters tend to claim that an AVF may lead to inequities in society, as racial minorities are more likely to join the military than other groups when the military is less able to compete with civilian job opportunities (Eitelberg, 1979, p. 396; Eitelberg & Binkin, 1982). Conversely, AVF supporters claim that the availability of higher income and valuable training, along with patriotic sentiments, appeal to a broad cross section of the population while providing free choice to citizens (U.S. Congressional Budget Office, 2007, p. 10).

To better understand the debate, it may be helpful to examine the representation of minorities in the U.S. military, which has a long and controversial history. The issue is

related to racial problems in American society, particularly because of the participation of African Americans. As Armor and Gilroy (2010, p. 223) write, the representation of minorities in the United States focused on whether to exclude or include African Americans in combat units before and during the Second World War. The issue then moved to racial integration at the beginning of the Cold War. During the AVF, however, representation of African Americans and Hispanics was of considerable interest in the United States.

Much attention has been devoted to the topic of whether the U.S. military's AVF has become disproportionately composed of individuals from racial/ethnic minority groups. A Congressional Budget Office study tends to support this claim. It shows that, "[Nineteen] percent of the entire active-duty enlisted force in 2006 was black compared with 14 percent of the 17- to 49-year old U.S. population" (U.S. Congressional Budget Office, 2007, p. 21). However, it also reports underrepresentation of Hispanics as "11 percent of the enlisted force, versus 14 percent of civilians ages 17 to 49" (U.S. Congressional Budget Office, 2007, p. 21). This data, presented in Figure 1, suggests that the AVF, despite certain discrepancies in the representation of minorities, does not currently pose a significant threat to social equity.

Figure 1. Proportion of Blacks and Hispanics, Aged 17 to 49 Years, in the United States Military versus the U.S. Population as a Whole, 2007.



Source: U.S. Congressional Budget Office, 2007, p. 21

When it comes to Turkey, we must first look at the demographic composition of the country to better understand the meaning of representation of minorities/subgroups in the military. Turkey does not provide data on the demographic distribution of the Turkish population. However, to evaluate concerns on social equity, we need to base our argument on data. At this point, the CIA Fact book facilitates the task of finding this data.

The Turkish population is comprised predominantly of Turks. According to the Treaty of Lausanne, the Turkish non-Muslim population is also accepted as minorities and includes Armenians, Greeks, and Jewish people. As seen in Table 8, Non-Muslims in Turkey make up nearly 0.02 percent, a fraction of the general population (CIA Factbook, 2012). As a result, religious factors do not seem to seriously threaten social equity if an AVF were implemented.

Table 8. Population in Turkey by Religion, 2014

Religion	Population	Ratio %
Muslims	79,987,004	99.8
Non-Muslims	1,632,387	0.02
Total	81,619,382	100

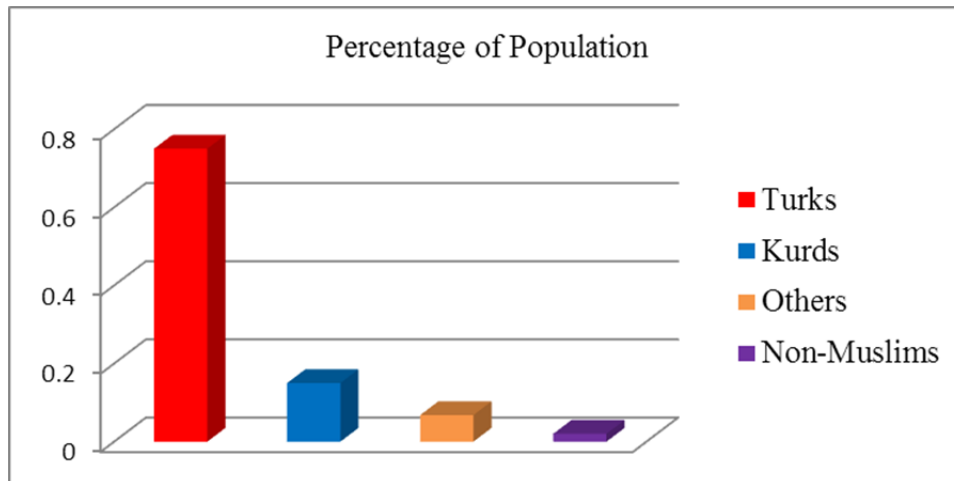
Adapted from the CIA Factbook. (11 March, 2016). Retrieved from <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/download/>

Furthermore, the country has a Kurdish population living mostly in the eastern and southeastern parts of the country along with major cities such as Istanbul, Ankara, and Izmir. Although it is not stated clearly, other subgroups include Bosnians, Albanians, Arabs, Chechens, and Georgians. Turks constitute most the population, at 75 percent, followed by Kurds (CIA Factbook, 2016). Figure 2 gives a better sense of the relative size of these subgroups in a graphical presentation.

In Turkey, since military service is universally compulsory for men, there is no problem with the representation of subgroups from society. All male citizens, regardless of their religion or ethnicity, have to perform military service at military installations.

However, abolishing the draft may pose big risks in the representation of subgroups in the military as shown in Figure 2. Sarıgil's recent research supports this view.

Figure 2. Populations in Turkey by Ethnicity, 2014



Adapted from the CIA Factbook. (11 March, 2016). Retrieved from: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/download/>

Sarıgil (2013, p. 14) indicates that 74 percent of the Turkish population support the military draft in Turkey. However, available information also shows that Kurds mostly support abolishing the draft due to the ongoing fight with a predominantly Kurdish terrorist organization (PKK). Because of this inclination in Turkish society, abolishing the draft in the future could severely damage relations between Turkish and Kurdish society and create a gap between the TAF and the society it serves.

## 2. Benefits and Burdens of Military Service

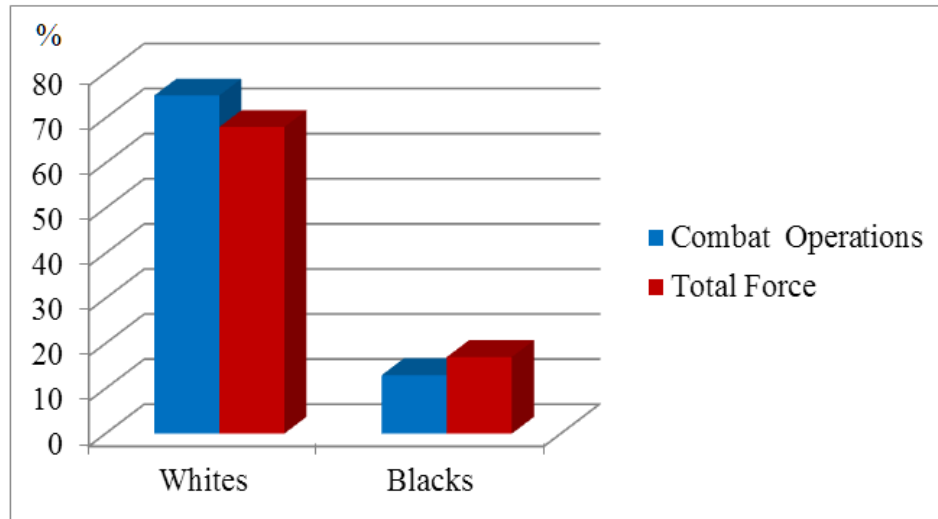
Military service naturally offers some privileges along with some burdens. A fair military service should ensure that benefits and burdens of national defense are shared equally throughout society. Benefits generally include a secure job, physical fitness, self-discipline, better training and education opportunities, economic benefits, and social status. Serving in the military, on the other hand, especially during times of conflict, means some risks and threats for service members. Distributing this burden equally across society becomes of considerable interest in determining whether all major

subgroups in a nation's population are exposed to the same risks. Obviously, the public pays much greater attention to this issue when the burdens of wartime service outweigh the benefits.

Despite some vulnerabilities open to be abused by elites, a draft, whether it is a lottery or universal conscription, claims to include all layers of society and spread the risks or burdens of military service more equally among citizens, regardless of demography or economic condition. However, in an AVF, distributing the burdens equally may be a big concern, as some minorities with generally lower income can be overrepresented in the military, particularly if a war has become unpopular and the interest in military service by potential volunteers has declined.

Although the U.S. experience shows a continuing pattern of overrepresentation of African-Americans in the enlisted ranks, U.S. lessons learned from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan offer some insight toward better understanding whether an AVF places greater risk on some parts of the population. A Congressional Budget Office (2007) report indicates that “white service members have a higher representation in combat occupations (75 percent) than in the force as a whole (68 percent)” (p. 24). (A graphical display of these data is presented in Figure 3, which follow.) The same report also shows that “black service members have a lower representation in those occupations (13 percent) than in the overall force (19 percent)” (p. 24). Further, data on wartime casualties reveal that “fatalities of white service members have been higher than their representation in the force (76 percent of deaths in both Iraq and Afghanistan)” (U.S. Congressional Budget Office, 2007, p. 24). So, it is not always clear to assert that an AVF necessarily places an unequal burden on racial/ethnic minorities.

Figure 3. Distribution of White and Black Americans in Combat Operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, 2007.



Source: U.S. Congressional Budget Office, 2007, p. 24)

Concerning the socioeconomic backgrounds of service members, the Congressional Budget Office report discusses the difficulty of achieving a well-documented record, as data showing the income levels of enlistees before recruitment provide sparse information. It concludes generally that American citizens from all income groups are present in the U.S. military, with those at the top and bottom somewhat underrepresented for various reasons (U.S. Congressional Budget Office, 2007, p. 27).

Under the current draft in Turkey, the burdens of military service outweigh the benefits. Actually, there are not too many financial benefits for Turkish citizens. For some citizens, especially those living in underdeveloped parts of the country, the military may be an important tool for mobility. At the same time, as discussed previously, completing military service is regarded as a highly prestigious accomplishment by Turkish society.

In terms of burdens, Turkey is a country that has been paying a heavy price because of the fight against terrorism for over three decades. The Turkish people have been well aware of the burdens of this struggle. The military draft has ensured mostly that the burden is equally shared among society, especially for this concern. In this fight, Turkey has lost nearly 5,500 security forces and 1,500 civilians (“28 Yılın Acı

Bilançosu,” 2012). It is commonly believed in Turkey that these casualties represent all citizens in Turkey, including Kurds. It is also very common to see a Kurdish soldier in the TAF fighting against his brother or sister in the PKK.

Even though the draft is believed to distribute the burdens of the fight against terrorism relatively evenly across all segments of the Turkish population, some people have claimed that the fight’s martyrs are mostly from poor and middle-class families (Yıldırımkaş, 2010). As rich families have better access to educational opportunities, their sons are more likely to graduate from universities. By earning a bachelor’s degree, they become eligible for 12 months of service as a third lieutenant or 6 months of short-term service as a corporal. Some also can work in foreign countries and become eligible for service in exchange for foreign currency.

As Akyürek (2010, p. 31) states, another criticism concerning equity relates to the policy of paid service, which has aroused some unrest in society. Mostly poor families, along with some scholars and statesmen, have expressed their displeasure with paid service, as it violates one of the most fundamental obligations of Turkish citizenship. Paid service, which allows a young man to buy out of his military obligation, was first implemented to compensate for financial losses from the Gölcük earthquake in 1999. It actually worked well and created important revenue for the recovery of the nation after the disaster. Thereafter, paid service has been implemented twice in the past five years, and nearly 273,000 people benefited from this privilege (Bedelli Askerlik, n.d.). However, consecutive enactment of paid service could trigger bigger problems in the future by creating cultural, social, and psychological differentiation and polarization among economic layers of society (Akyürek, 2010, p. 31).

Unlike the United States, an AVF in Turkey could increase the probability of putting the risk of a war on Turks rather than on other groups, mostly Kurds, once implemented. At this point, the situations in Turkey and in the United States differ. Turkey has been fighting with a terrorist organization whose members are predominantly Kurds, who also constitute an important part of its population. This does not necessarily mean all Kurds support PKK, but it could create a problem if Kurds were no longer required to serve in the TAF through the system of compulsory service.

So, a draft seems to be a better option for Turkey as long as the benefits and burdens of military service are taken into account, despite recent unrest stemming from paid service and fatalities perhaps coming mostly from lower-income families. A problem of this kind is much easier to handle, as solutions can be achieved by amending the legal system of the country. At the same time, putting the burden of military service mostly on Turks in the fight against a terrorist group comprised mostly of another subgroup in Turkish society may pose significant threats to Turkey if an AVF were established.

### **3. Women's Representation**

Women's participation in the TAF is addressed in the previous chapter from a historical perspective. The previous discussion provides ample information about the role of women in wars and their employment as officers in the Turkish military. The main objective here is to explain the reasons for excluding women from the current Turkish draft and to see if there is a potential for women to participate in the enlisted ranks if an AVF were introduced in Turkey.

Currently, as noted previously, women in Turkey are not obligated to serve as draftees. The reasons for excluding women from the draft center mostly on three points. Initially, the TAF did not need women to serve in the military. Additionally, women have not shown much interest to serve in the military as draftees (Toktaş, 2004, p. 258). And, finally, cultural and religious factors tend to discourage women from serving as conscripts.

First, the TAF has not experienced any manpower procurement problems throughout the history of the Turkish Republic. At present, the TAF employs nearly 322,000 draftees (TSK'dan Haberler, 2015), and the total population of young men in the draft pool between the ages of 18 and 21 is over three million (Turkish Statistics Institute, 2016). Additionally, the TAF has enough reserve forces to use in the event of an urgent situation, as all men in the Turkish population should be ready for military call-ups until they are 41 years of age. So, it is clear that the TAF has enough manpower, both in the draft and in the reserve pool, even in case of a war, regardless of participation by women.



Additionally, enlisting women in the military has neither gained much public attention nor been addressed as an issue in the Turkish political agenda. The country is a pioneer in promoting women's rights in the Muslim world, and women were granted those rights much earlier than in most European countries. However, Turkish civil society and women's movements in the nation have never considered the enlistment or drafting of women as a relevant discussion.

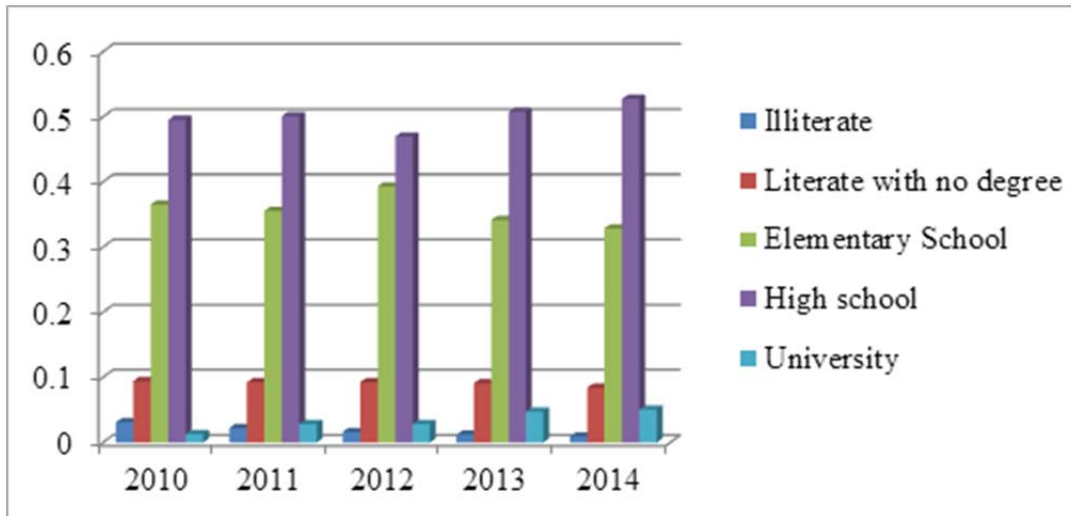
Cultural and religious factors have also discouraged women from being conscripted in Turkey. Culturally, serving in the military is viewed strongly as a masculine activity. Actually, traditions and rituals mentioned in the previous chapter support this assumption that the draft is regarded as a tool for young men to prove themselves and rise to full manhood. Religious factors are also alleged to deter women from the military service, since some part of Turkish society seem to believe that Islamic practices prohibit women from participating in the workforce. The fact that female participation rates in the labor forces of most Muslim countries is much lower than in the Western world supports this point. Obviously, several other factors contribute to this situation; however, the role of Islamic perceptions is undeniable.

Concerning the potential for female participation in the enlisted ranks under an AVF, experiences in the United States may offer some insight, despite cultural and religious differences. Parker and Patten (2011) observe that female participation in the enlisted ranks of the U.S. military has increased from 2 percent to 14 percent since the draft was abolished in 1973. Abandoning the draft has also boosted the share of female commissioned officers to a significant degree, from 4 percent in 1973 to 16 percent currently (Parker & Patten, 2011). Nevertheless, there is still a huge potential for female participation in the U.S. military, and great efforts are undertaken to increase it. Regarding Turkey, it is very difficult to estimate the potential for women to serve in an AVF in Turkey because of the aforementioned reasons.

Figure 4 shows the educational level of women in a potential draft pool ages of 18 through 21 (Turkish Statistics Institute, 2016). The total female population in this age group was nearly 2.5 million in 2014. At the same time, women with an education level of at least a high school graduate make up nearly 60 percent of total female population in

a potential draft pool. Consequently, there would be a huge potential for employing women in the enlisted ranks of the TAF if an AVF were established.

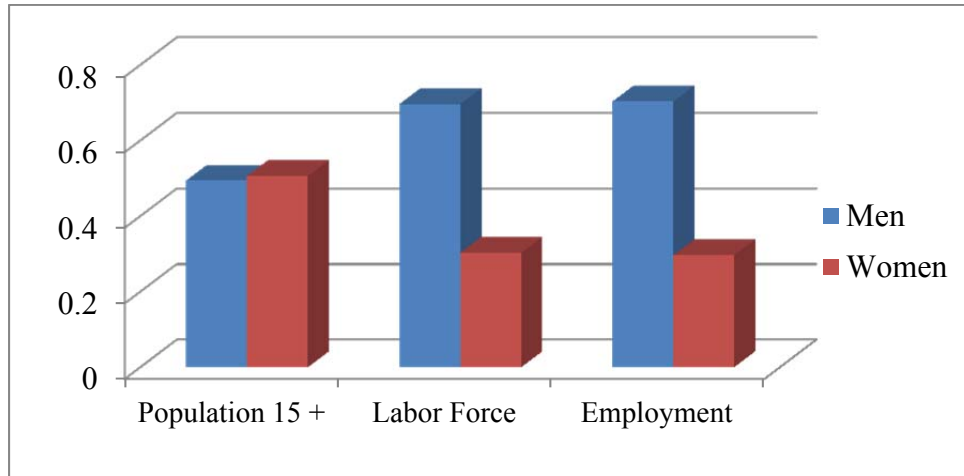
Figure 4. Education Levels of Women, Aged 18 to 21 Years, in Turkey, 2010 to 2014



Adapted from: Turkish Statistics Institute (18 January, 2016). Retrieved from <http://www.tuik.gov.tr/PreTabloArama.do?metod=search&araType=vt>

Despite this potential, it would be a big mistake to overlook female participation rates in the labor force for future enlistment in Turkey. Despite recent improvements, female participation in the Turkish workforce is less than in most other developed nations. Figure 5 shows the comparative proportions of men and women in the Turkish workforce. Although women in Turkey make up 50.6 percent of the population over the age of 15, they constitute only around 30 percent of the labor force. The unemployment level among women also is much higher than that of men (Turkish Statistics Institute, 2016). These data suggest that the voluntary enlistment rates of women might not be too high if Turkey introduced an AVF to replace the current draft. However, an AVF might act as a catalyst to increase the share of women officers and petty officers in the TAF.

Figure 5. Participation in the Turkish Workforce by Gender, 2016



Adapted from Turkish Statistics Institute (18 January, 2016). Retrieved from <http://www.tuik.gov.tr/PreTabloArama.do?metod=search&araType=vt>

#### 4. Conscientious Objection

The previous chapter provides information on legal issues relating to conscientious objection. Nevertheless, it would be a big mistake to reduce the discussion of conscientious objection in Turkey to only the legal dimension while ignoring social realities and the security environment. That is why the aim here is to cover the social implications of conscientious objection to the security environment of Turkey.

The number of conscientious objectors in Turkey has been considerably negligible since the first incident in 1989. The social implications of draft within Turkish society have been the most important factor for this. Most citizens in Turkey view the military as an important part of Turkish society. The country's long history and traditional factors along with the draft have had a huge influence on this perception. One of the most distinctive characteristics of the Turkish nation is the idea that it is a soldier nation. The draft has historically influenced and consolidated this understanding.

Additionally, military service is not regarded as compulsory for most citizens; instead, it is welcomed by the most of Turkish society. Parents tend to become proud of their sons when they see pictures of them in uniform (Varoğlu & Bıçaksız, 2005, p. 585). A wide variety of rituals for sending males off to military service also support this idea.

Turkish citizens also honor the completion of military service, as discussed previously, and the Turkish nation mostly perceives military service as a process for men to pass into adulthood. The influence of these traditions cannot be overlooked in Turkey, which has a thousand years of military history. As these perceptions force or encourage young men to fulfill their obligations, the number of conscientious objectors has remained quite limited in Turkey.

A nation's security environment is one of the most important factors for a country to recognize as it relates to the right of conscientious objection. And, security concerns are much different for Turkey than for Western nations that recognize conscientious objection. Actually, democratic changes and reforms in Europe, especially in recent years following the Cold War and the inclusion of Eastern European states in the EU, have changed the security environment in Europe. These changes have affected popular attitudes toward military service throughout the whole continent. As a result, most EU states have abolished the draft. Partly as a result of this, nearly all EU members have agreed that conscientious objection is one of the most fundamental rights of humanity. Thus, EU members that have preserved compulsory military service generally provide options for alternative service to conscientious objectors.

Turkey's situation cannot be compared easily with that of European states, as it is situated in one of the most fragile regions in the world. Actually, the security environment for Turkey has become even more fragile over recent years, especially considering the fight in southeastern Turkey. As a result, it is hard to recognize conscientious objection under these circumstances.

### **C. MILITARY EFFECTIVENESS**

Effectiveness is the fundamental objective of any military. Throughout history, all nations have looked for ways to raise the most effective military force with limited resources. Paret (1989) states that, "Military power expresses and implements the power of the state in a variety of ways within and beyond the state's borders, and is also one of the instruments with which political power is originally created and made permanent" (p. 240).

Although military effectiveness has been the ultimate objective of nations, it cannot be achieved easily. Factors affecting military effectiveness include economics, morale, training, manpower, and other national characteristics. A manpower model of the military has recently become a significant tool to achieve this goal. Thus, nations have started to use different models to increase the effectiveness of their military. These models include compulsory service, an AVF, or some combination of manpower procurement systems.

It is very difficult to precisely measure the efficiency of the two main manpower models, although military effectiveness is a shared goal for all nations. However, the quality of soldiers, turnover rates, and manpower problems play a crucial role in the effectiveness of a military as long as a manpower model is involved.

Turkey has always needed effective military troops. In recent years, the question of whether the draft might adversely affect the Turkish military's capabilities has gained attention. Some scholars have started to claim that an AVF may be the best option for the TAF in the years ahead. This chapter examines Turkey's dilemma in terms of military effectiveness and addresses the quality of enlistees, turnover, and manpower management.

### **1. Quality of Enlistees**

The relation between the quality of enlistees and military effectiveness is unquestionable. Wartime skills depend on the quality of military personnel. Studies after the Korean War support this point. Research in the United States indicates that "successful fighters tended to be more intelligent, healthier, more socially mature and emotionally stable, and more rapid and accurate in performing manual and physical tasks. Conversely, those who were low in intelligence tended to make poor fighters" (Egbert as cited by Kurt, 2001, p. 28). However, measuring this correlation, especially on mission accomplishment in wartime, is a difficult task as it may necessitate complex calculations and include some circumstantial variables. Nevertheless, it may be best measured through a more practical method of looking at education levels and test scores of enlistees.

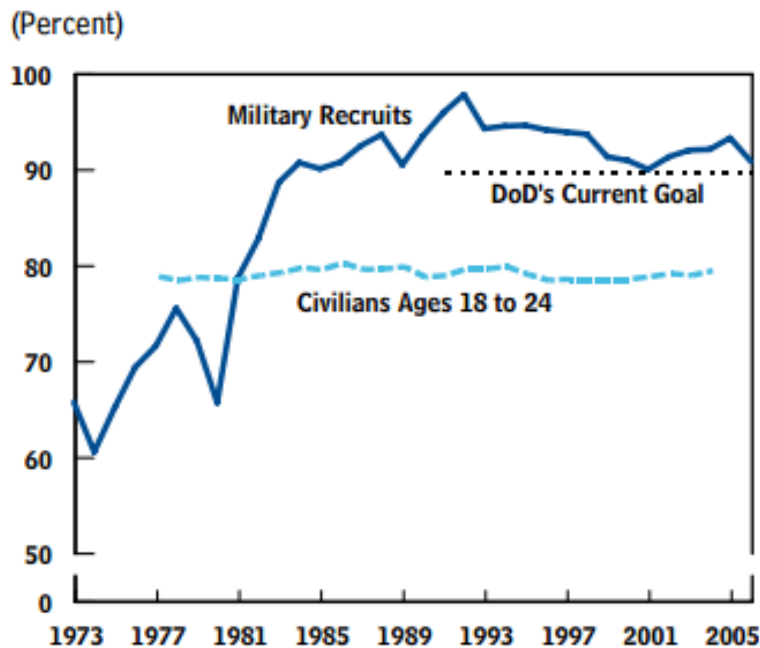
Supporters of a draft often claim that the relationship between the effectiveness of a military and education or test scores is hard to establish and may not affect mission accomplishment during a war. However, proponents of an AVF tend to emphasize that the increased quality of enlisted personnel in the United States, especially after abolishing the draft, accounts for the military's success over the past four decades.

Increases in the educational level of military personnel are said to correlate strongly with mission accomplishment. Many studies in recent years have indicated that enlistees with a high school diploma are more likely than non-graduates to finish basic military training and to stay in the military (U.S. Congressional Budget Office, 2007, p. 13). The same report from the Congressional Budget Office also indicates that it is much easier to train enlistees with considerably higher scores on the Armed Forces Qualification Test (AFQT) than those with lower scores. The military performance of those with higher scores on the AFQT is also generally better on a variety of tasks.

In the U.S. military, significant improvements have taken place in terms of test scores and education levels since the end of the draft. Rostker (2006) describes these improvements as one of the most remarkable ways that the AVF has contributed to the U.S. military.

Figure 6 shows the educational levels of military recruits since the start of the AVF in 1973. By comparison, during the 1960s and the 1970s, 70 percent of U.S. military recruits had at least a high school diploma (U.S. Congressional Budget Office, 2007, p. 14). With the AVF, the average percentage of recruits with at least a high school diploma has steadily increased, and especially since 1981, when the military raised its pay to be more competitive in the labor market. Additionally, it is higher than that of persons in the civilian population who are in a comparable age group (18 to 24). Since the 1990s, it seems that the U.S. Department of Defense has met its goal.

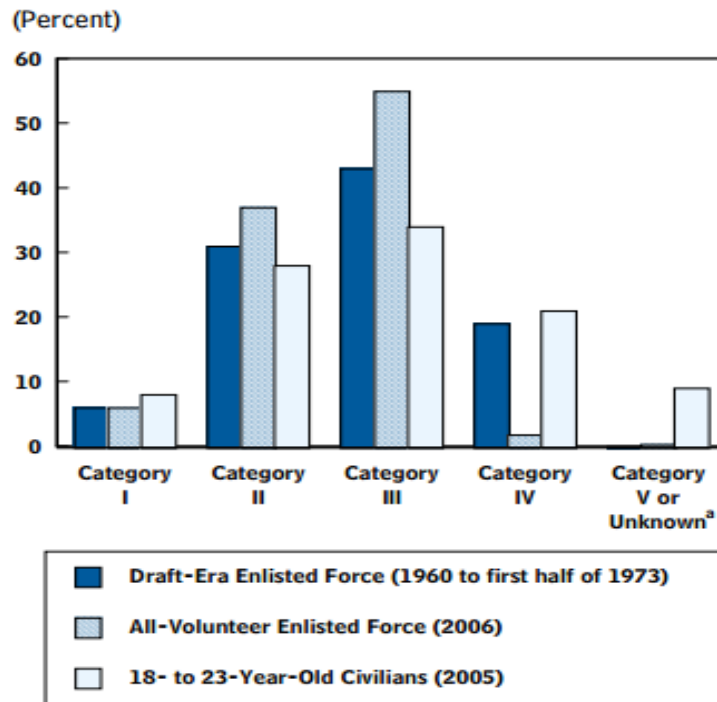
Figure 6. Comparison of Recruits and Young Civilians with a High School Diploma from 1973 to 2006.



Source: U.S. Congressional Budget Office, 2007, p. 14

Figure 7 shows the AFQT categories of U.S. military recruits during the draft and AVF periods, and compares these with the scores for young civilians of the same age in the general population. It should be noted that the persons with the highest scores on the AFQT are grouped in Category I, while those with the lowest scores are placed in Category V. Persons who score in Category V are deemed ineligible for military enlistment (U.S. Congressional Budget Office, 2007, p. 16). As seen in Figure 7, recruit scores on the AFQT generally improved, particularly in Categories II and III, after the draft ended. It is also noteworthy that, with exception of Category I, the scores of recruits during both the draft and AVF tended to be higher than those of their counterparts in the general population. At the same time, it is obvious that, in terms of AFQT scores, young people of comparable age are not “perfectly” represented in the military, much to the delight of the military’s leaders.

Figure 7. Comparison of Recruits and Young Civilians by AFQT Category over Different Eras, 1973 to 2006.



Source: U.S. Congressional Budget Office, 2007, p. 16.

The draft in Turkey provides a good example of how perfect representation of the population can actually have a negative impact on military effectiveness. Under the current system in Turkey, all liable men are recruited without being subjected to a selection process. This makes it possible to see all sorts of Turkish young men in the TAF. As a result, the same problems in Turkish society can be found in the Turkish military, as it perfectly represents the young male population. This applies to a number of demographic factors, including educational level, crime rates, suicide tendencies, substance abuse, undiagnosed physiological or psychological disorders, and physical incapacity. Yet, for obvious reasons, military leaders desire to command the best-qualified soldiers. Unfortunately, the current structure of the TAF does not allow commanders to enjoy this privilege.

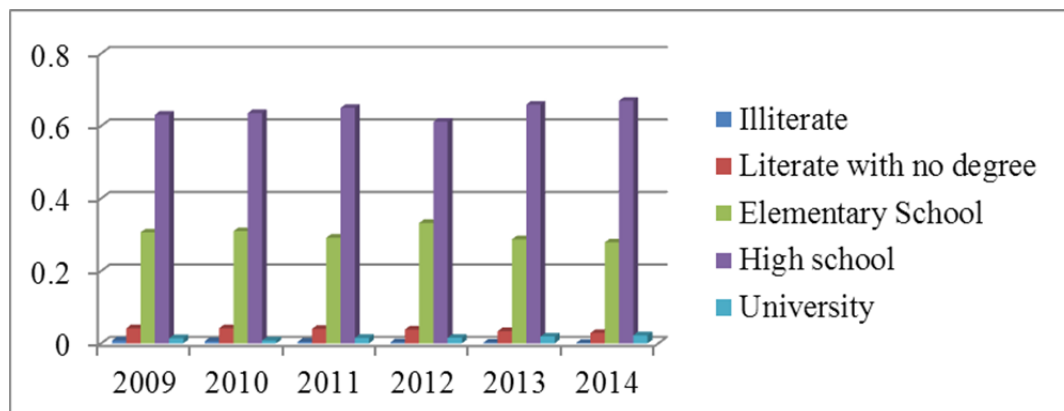
Available statistics on educational level, crime rates, and suicide tendencies can provide some evidence to better understand the quality of draftees in Turkey. As all



young men become eligible for military service at the age of 20, the statistics related to this age group are most relevant.

Figure 8 shows the educational level of draftees between the ages of 18–21 from 2009-2014 in Turkey (Turkish Statistics Institute, 2016). As seen here, at least 60 percent of draftees tend to have a high school diploma (and more when including those with a university education). The remaining recruits, about 30 percent, have an elementary education or are considered literate without a credential. A small number of recruits are illiterate. Although roughly 70 percent of recruits have at least a high school diploma, the remaining 30 percent have enough potential to adversely influence the effectiveness of the TAF.

Figure 8. Education Levels of TAF Draftees Aged 18 to 21 Years, 2009 to 2014



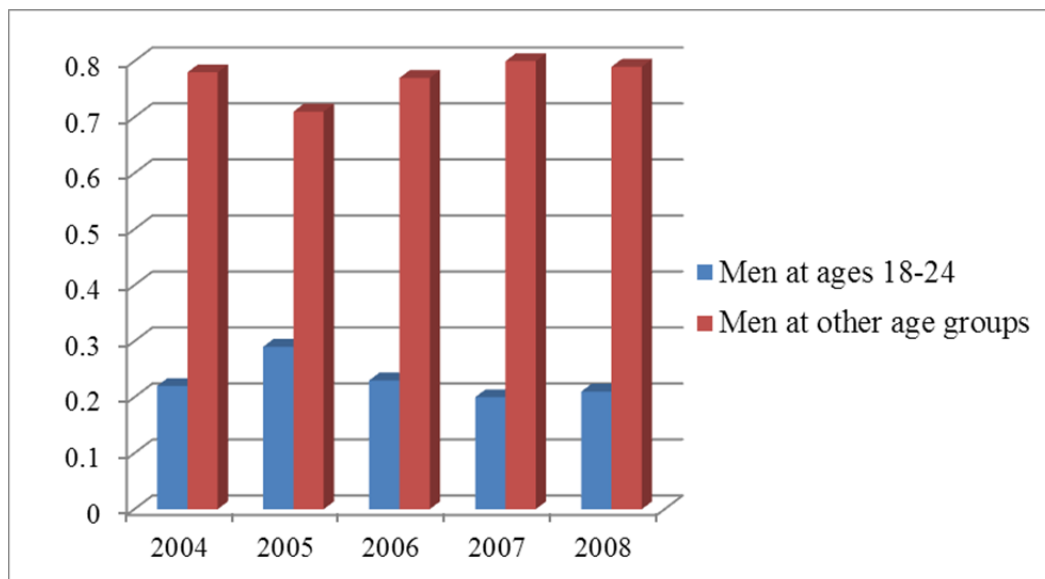
Adapted from Turkish Statistics Institute (18 January, 2016). Retrieved from <http://www.tuik.gov.tr/PreTabloArama.do?metod=search&araType=vt>

The high school graduation rate of Turkish recruits falls well below the average of the U.S. military during recent times, when well over 90 percent possess a high school diploma and almost all of the rest have some form of high school equivalency certificate. This suggests the potential to increase the education level in the TAF if a selection process were applied in Turkey. One problem with statistics on educational levels is that they cannot measure the quality of a recruit's high school education. As Turkey is not as homogeneous as Western countries, the quality of education differs immensely depending on the region. So, a high rate of high school graduates does not necessarily guarantee a higher quality of enlistee, as there is no selection process due to universal

conscription. In the United States, the selection process combines an applicant's education with his or her score on the AFQT, thus allowing for a more complete picture of the applicant's qualifications, while accounting for possible differences in the quality of education.

Figure 9 shows the rates of men sentenced to prison in Turkey by age group (Turkish Statistics Institute, 2016). On average, young men in the draft pool have been responsible for nearly 20 percent of crimes that have resulted in imprisonment. Obviously, they are only drafted when they have completed their term in prison. This creates a serious risk for disciplinary problems in the military which may negatively affect force effectiveness. Also, these draftees have a negative impact on other draftees, as they spend all their time together at military installations.

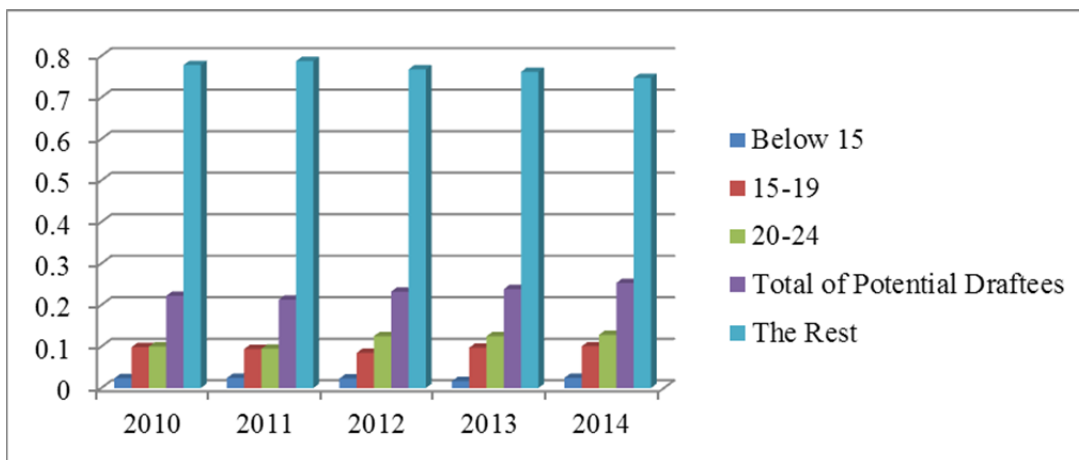
Figure 9. Criminal Imprisonment of Men in Turkey, Percentage Distribution by Age Group, 2004 to 2008



Adapted from Turkish Statistics Institute (18 January, 2016). Retrieved from <http://www.tuik.gov.tr/PreTabloArama.do?metod=search&araType=vt>

Suicide is not a serious problem in Turkey compared with Western nations. However, it becomes a huge burden for the military and a negative factor for its effectiveness. Figure 10 shows the suicide rates among men (Turkish Statistics Institute, 2016). These data suggest that men in the draft pool are responsible for nearly 20 percent of suicide attempts. Although it does not directly imply that 20 percent of draftees have a tendency to commit suicide, it helps to understand risk groups among Turkish men. Consequently, one can assume that the TAF drafts men who have the potential of committing suicide due to the lack of a screening process for enlistment.

Figure 10. Suicide Among Men Aged 15 to 64 Years, Percentage Distribution by Age Group, 2010 to 2014



Adapted from: Turkish Statistics Institute (18 January, 2016). Retrieved from <http://www.tuik.gov.tr/PreTabloArama.do?metod=search&araType=vt>

## 2. Turnover

Turnover simply means replacing an employee with a new one. It has become one of the most important factors affecting the performance of organizations in both the private and public sectors. When it comes to the military, it refers mostly to training costs, since a good portion of the replacement costs are for training.

The military training for draftees generally includes basic training and observational training. Basic training is necessary for soldiers to become fully capable of conducting military tasks, while observational training requires the acquisition of certain skills in order to perform particular duties. Basic training in the military requires more

trainers and more time allocated for training than in other periods. And, observational training mostly increases the number of soldiers in non-effective status, especially at the earliest periods of their service.

One of biggest criticisms of the draft is that it leads to lower retention and higher turnover due to the large number of accessions. A military draft naturally necessitates less length of service than an AVF. This adversely affects personnel turnover. With more inexperienced soldiers due to higher turnover rates, the more service members receive basic training and the more time is allocated for observational training. This naturally increases training costs and the time needed for orientation. In contrast, an AVF increases the term of enlistment and reduces turnover. This leads to a decrease in training costs and the number of personnel in a non-effective status.

The U.S. experience after the adoption of the AVF supports these points. Before the AVF, an average draftee had been serving for two years. However, in the AVF, most service members serve for at least six years. As a result, turnover rates in the U.S. military decreased with the AVF. This increased the number of experienced service members and, thus, military effectiveness. As Kosiak (2008) writes: “Studies have shown that experienced troops tend to be at least 50 percent more effective than first-term personnel in a variety of important tasks” (p. 55).

Under the current draft in Turkey, young men are called for military service during four different periods. The length of obligation is 12 months, and nearly three months is allocated for basic military training and orientation to the position assigned. Once newcomers are called for military service, they attend military training brigades where they take basic military training. Upon completing basic military training, they start to perform their service while also spending time for observational training. The length of observational training differs, depending on military occupation code, task requirements, military branch, and education level. So, the TAF experiences permanent separations and new accessions every three months. This leads to a repeated, vicious cycle in which Turkish officers and NCOs have new individuals to train, get familiar with, undertake administrative work, and orient the rest of the troops with newcomers.

Military training under the current draft in Turkey takes a great deal of time and energy and barely produces an outcome, as draftees are released from service just at the time when they start to learn something about military service. As a result, the TAF suffers from a high turnover rate by separating 25 percent of draftees and accepting the same percentage of newcomers every three months. This cycle increases training costs and the number of ineffective personnel due to basic and observational training. Thus, the effectiveness of the TAF declines with the increase in inexperienced draftees.

### **3. Manpower Management**

One of the most significant concerns of the draft is its potential to create manpower management problems. In a draft, the most essential aim is to maintain equity among soldiers. A draft, at this point, cannot differentiate a productive soldier from an ineffective one. As a result, draftees do not have any incentive to perform better, as all basically seem equal.

A lack of compensation demoralizes highly-skilled and effective soldiers from fully conducting their responsibilities. Because of this, a draftee's marginal utility only increases when he refrains from performing an assigned duty or when he undertakes it effortlessly. As Kurt (2001) observes, there is a tendency to avoid the work in a draft. As no reward is received, a draftee becomes happier when he avoids performing a given duty, or doing it with minimal effort.

Additionally, a draft does not consider the inefficient use of labor. Managers in the military view draftees mostly as cheap or free labor. Officers and NCOs in a draft do not look for the most effective way to perform a task, as the service is completely free. This, in the long term, triggers greater management problems. Because of this, members of the military become inured to the ineffective use of cheap labor, which creates further strategic inertia.

Moreover, in a draft, the goal of an organization clashes with the goal of an individual. The objective of the military in a draft, as in an AVF, is to increase the effectiveness of the military and to provide better security for its citizens while using limited resources. However, the aim of a conscript is to complete his mandatory

obligation as soon as possible and with minimal effort. This creates a huge gap between the goals of the organization and those of the individual. Kurt (2001) describes this as “unavoidable draft illness” (p. 27). Thus, maintaining expensive weapon systems and equipment, while dealing with the physical and mental problems of enlistees, becomes a huge burden for the military because of this “draft illness.”

#### **D. CONCLUSION**

For Turkey, the decision of whether to continue with the draft or accept an AVF is very hard, if not nearly impossible. The country strongly needs effective and deterrent military forces against internal and external threats. Conditions in its geography are extremely volatile and unstable. Additionally, the fight against terrorism with PKK has continued for over three decades. So, the security environment does not tolerate any weakness in terms of military effectiveness. Improving military effectiveness through an AVF may damage political legitimacy and social equity. Consequently, it is very important for Turkey to designate tolerable limits within the PRM.

The legitimacy of the TAF originates mostly from conscription, through which the TAF has gained a unique place in Turkish society. Turks generally express more confidence in the military than other institutions. Despite military interventions in political life, Turks seem to never view their military as an oppressor. Another important contribution of the draft appears in military adventurism. In a worn-torn region, it may become an important tool to keep decision makers away from seeking adventures. With an AVF, these acquisitions historically built through the draft may disappear. A structure of professional soldiers may endanger the democratic constitution in Turkey, which has a history of military interventions, despite the difference in character of other nations.

The Turkish draft seems perfect for social equity, especially given the fight against terrorism. Despite reactions to paid service and claims about the unfair distribution of burdens for poor and middle class families, it is said to allocate the burden equally among Turkish society. The draft also includes all subgroups, regardless of ethnicity or religion, which includes all segments in society. Women are not allowed to

participate in the draft at present, but this is not big problem as women's representation in the draft has never become an issue of importance in Turkey. The matter of conscientious objection may also have some potential to threaten the draft in the future, although it has not gathered much support from Turkish society.

Conversely, an AVF could seriously damage social equity, given the fight against terrorism and the composition of the terrorist organization. Kurds make up a significant part of the Turkish population. Therefore, Kurds and other groups in society may be far less likely than Turks to volunteer for service in the TAF. This could create disproportionate representation in the military and place a relatively heavier burden of the fight against terror on the segments of society who volunteer. On the other hand, an AVF has potential to increase women's representation and automatically abolish the problem of conscientious objection.

The "perfect" representation of the Turkish draft is the biggest threat to the effectiveness of the TAF. As there is no screening process, all young men are called for conscription. As a result, the problems of society tend to be reproduced in the military. Further, the quality of enlistees is roughly equivalent to the quality of young men throughout the society, which includes a full range of ability, from highest to lowest. Another problem with the draft relates to turnover rates. The TAF has a huge turnover rates as young men are called for duty every three months. Considering the twelve-month service period, it becomes a major burden for the military. The draft also creates management problems, as it lacks motivation for draftees, while the goals of individuals and those of the TAF clash. Therefore, an AVF seems a much better option for effectiveness when holding the other two criteria constant.

The draft may seem to have some negative impacts on the Turkish military. And, an AVF offers potential solutions to these specific problems. However, if the draft were abolished, it could create irreversible side effects as long as political legitimacy and social equity are involved. Fixing social problems is much more difficult than addressing organizational troubles. Social problems require more time and greater effort. Thus, Turkey does not have any flexibility for increasing the limits of political legitimacy and social equity for the sake of military effectiveness. An optimal solution to increase

military effectiveness may be hidden somewhere through other mechanisms. The conclusion of this thesis focuses on this theme by examining other topics covered in previous chapters.



## **V. SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **A. SUMMARY**

Clearly, a strong, effective national defense is the most important reason for forming a military. This has been the ultimate objective of nations seeking to protect themselves since organized militaries first existed. However, approaches toward staffing a military, whether through compulsory service, voluntary means, or some combination of the two, has proved to be a highly controversial issue in modern times during periods of sustained peace. This is especially true in the United States, which replaced military conscription with an AVF in 1973, and where an “AVF versus draft debate” has continued since the day the draft ended.

Situated in a highly problematic geographical region, Turkey maintains one of the largest militaries in the world. To populate such a large military, the country has depended on compulsory service for young men since its inception. Although the trend in Western states favors militaries filled entirely with volunteers, Turkey has not taken steps to radically transform its manpower recruitment model. Some scholars have questioned the approach taken by the TAF in not considering recent trends toward abolishing conscription and asked whether the old ways of staffing the Turkish military have rendered it less effective. The main argument here is that the Turkish military relies too heavily on non-professional, lesser-qualified soldiers.

The present draft system may have adverse consequences for the effectiveness of the Turkish military. However, once abolished, irreversible aftereffects could influence Turkish society along with many important functions of the TAF. Fixing the potential problems of compulsory service can have direct or indirect repercussions for Turkish society, originating mainly from society’s historical ties to the military through the draft. This makes the decision of the country on how to staff the military even more difficult.

Influenced by the complexity and difficulty of the choice between the draft and an AVF, this thesis attempts to determine the best approach to provide manpower for the Turkish military presently and in the years ahead. To achieve this objective, the study

examines the current military draft in Turkey using the PRM. The study also utilizes lessons learned from the experience of the U.S. military and determines whether they apply equally to the situation in Turkey.

The background discussion introduces the manpower system of the TAF and the draft in Turkey, as they are the baseline for evaluating present conditions. Then, the literature review examines the history of conscription in the U.S. and the employment of the PRM model. The history of the conscription in the U.S. includes periods from the American Revolutionary War to the War in Vietnam because shifts in attitudes during these periods are important in better understanding the PRM. Next, the literature review presents the PRM and its three major elements: political legitimacy, social equity, and military effectiveness. The review reveals certain advantages and disadvantages for both a draft and an AVF by exploring the views of scholars regarding each element.

Understanding the unique status of the military in Turkey and some recent internal and external developments is of key importance when examining the draft in Turkey. Consequently, the discussion of social implications focuses on two topics: the military and the society in Turkey and recent trends. The Turkish military achieved a high level of popular approval because of its role in Turkish history. Its interactions with the nation through the draft also created and consolidated some important concepts. These include the military nation, soldiers as saviors of the state and the Atatürk effect, service as a sacred duty, and rituals created through the draft.

Nevertheless, favorable views of the Turkish military by society are subject to change. Because of this, public attitudes toward the military draft may move from one direction to another. These attitudes could be affected by certain national or international events, such as trials of high-ranking service members regarding an alleged military coup, the continuing struggle against terrorism, women's participation, and conscientious objection.

The fourth chapter of the thesis uses the PRM to analyze the Turkish draft. The study benefits from the experiences of the U.S. military. It also utilizes some quantitative

analyses of data on Turkish youth in the draft pool and in the U.S. military. The analysis is structured in three parts.

The first part focuses on conscription in Turkey in terms of political legitimacy and includes democracy, military adventurism, and popular trust in the military. The next part evaluates the Turkish draft from the standpoint of social equity. It looks at the representation of minorities, the benefits and burdens of military service, women's representation, and conscientious objection. Finally, the last part probes the effectiveness of the TAF in terms of the quality of draftees, turnover, and manpower management.

## **B. CONCLUSION**

At present, the biggest concern regarding the effectiveness of the TAF relates to perfect representation, high turnover and low retention rates, and manpower management problems. Since one of the most significant features of a military draft should be equity, all liable male citizens are recruited without being subjected to a selection or screening process. The nation essentially applies the principle of universal conscription of its male citizens. Because of this, the male youth population is "perfectly represented" in the Turkish military. As a result of such perfection, however, the TAF enlists the worst elements of Turkish society along with the best and casts them together in the military's ranks.

Unfortunately, the current practice of the military draft does not allow the TAF to differentiate between enlistees in terms of their education and intellectual ability, psychological disorders, or physical capacities. Therefore, it is natural to see a draftee with no literacy or a low level of intelligence serving side-by-side with a university graduate in the TAF. Also, draftees with considerably higher suicidal tendencies or criminal history are likely to work with more typical citizens in the same unit. Even worse, enlistees with a physical incapacity have the potential to damage unit cohesion and adversely affect military operations.

Another criticism toward the draft is that it leads to lower retention and higher turnover rates due to the large number of accessions. The draft practice requires inducting young men at four different periods, and the service obligation is 12 months. Given this,

the Turkish military releases 25 percent of its draftees and accepts the same ratio of newcomers every three months and expends great effort over a continuing cycle in training the new draftees.

Finally, Turkey's universal draft cannot differentiate a productive soldier from an ineffective one. As all draftees seem to be equal, they do not have any incentive to perform better. A lack of compensation discourages highly-skilled and effective soldiers from fully executing their responsibilities. Further, the goal of the TAF clashes with the goal of draftees in the current system. The objective of the TAF is to increase the effectiveness of the military and provide better security to its citizens. However, the aim of a conscript is to complete his mandatory obligation as soon as possible and return to his civilian life. This creates a huge gap between the objectives of the Turkish military and that of its draftees.

An AVF has considerable potential to improve the effectiveness of the Turkish military and fix these problems through a comprehensive screening and selection process. It may bar the worst elements of society from military service, decrease turnover rates, and close the gap between the objectives of the TAF and those of draftees. At the same time, even though an AVF is likely to solve certain problems of the draft regarding military effectiveness, it may create some new sociopolitical problems in the future. Once accepted, it may adversely affect political legitimacy and social equity.

Under the current system, the TAF enjoys a high level of legitimacy since the military is part of the social and cultural fabric of the nation. Also, its historical ties with the nation through the draft consolidated its legitimacy and gave the TAF an elevated status. Because of this, the Turkish population expresses a high level of trust in the TAF, ranking it as one of the most trusted institutions in the nation. Moreover, despite military coups in near history, Turks still highly respect the TAF mainly because of the draft. Additionally, the draft is likely to force decision makers to favor diplomacy and prevent military adventurism.

An AVF, on the other hand, may cause considerable problems for political legitimacy of the TAF. For example, it has the potential to put historical acquisitions of

the TAF and Turkish society in danger, such as the military nation, soldiers as the saviors of the state and the Atatürk effect, service as a sacred duty, and rituals. This may negatively influence popular trust in the military and the legitimacy of the power. Additionally, it is more likely that Turkish citizens could become generally less interested in foreign policy issues that affect the military, while making it easier for legislators to support war decisions, since the sons of society are no longer broadly represented in the ranks of the AVF. For example, Turkey's geography is so volatile that it is more likely than most Western states to be involved in a regional war. At this point, an AVF may pose great risks for engagement in conflict within a very fragile region.

Apart from women's representation and conscientious objection, the current conscription system does not pose considerable threats to social equity. Actually, women's representation and conscientious objection have never been of much interest in Turkish society. Additionally, despite debates on paid service and the unfair distribution of the burdens of the fight against terrorism on poor and middle class families, the draft seems to allocate the burden fairly among young men in Turkish society. It also includes all population subgroups, regardless of ethnicity or religion.

An AVF, on the other hand, has the potential to damage social equity considering the fight against terrorism and the composition of terrorist organizations. Kurds make up an important part of the Turkish population and a majority of the PKK. This does not necessarily mean all Kurds support the PKK. However, they could be less likely to participate in the TAF under an AVF. This could lead to significant problems for Turkish society, such as widening the gap between Turks and Kurds and putting the burden of military service unfairly and disproportionately on other segments of Turkish society.

In addition to elements of the PRM, an AVF is best suited for times of peace. It necessitates having a strong reserve force for surge capacity during a major conflict, thus enabling time to renew a draft. However, Turkey has been fighting with PKK terrorists for over three decades. Although it is not a conventional war, it necessitates great effort. Also, the geography of the country is very fragile, as noted, and this compels Turkey to have the capacity to respond to a war very quickly.

The question of whether an AVF would achieve enough support from Turkish society is unknown. In this context, the TAF would need to compete directly with other occupational or educational opportunities for young people to attract enough qualified young volunteers to join the military. So, an AVF does not necessarily guarantee an increase in the quality of draftees; it would require significant resources and a supporting structure that would allow the TAF to compete effectively in the open market for young volunteers.

The draft may seem to have a negative impact on the effectiveness of the TAF. Additionally, an AVF has some potential to fix problems of the draft. However, if the draft were abolished, it could create irreversible social problems in terms of political legitimacy and social equity. Social problems are much more difficult to deal with than organizational troubles. They require more time and greater effort. Consequently, it would be very difficult for Turkey to tolerate increasing limits of political legitimacy and social equity for the sake of military effectiveness under the present conditions. An optimal solution to increase military effectiveness may be hidden somewhere else through other mechanisms, such as employing more contracting privates.

### **C. RECOMMENDATIONS**

Contracting privates offers a potentially useful approach toward improving the effectiveness of the Turkish military. However, more time is needed to see the full impact of contracting privates since it is too early to truly assess these individuals' performance. Additionally, employment of this type is likely to create some organizational problems in the future. Further, since the use of contracting privates is a relatively recent action, no definitive measures are available yet to assess public support. It is strongly recommended that a comprehensive study be conducted to determine the effect of contracting privates on the TAF. This study could be initiated soon, even in the absence of certain information, to monitor the early effects of the policy and to make necessary adjustments.

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